

THE RUSSIAN REVIEW



*An American Quarterly
Devoted to Russia
Past and Present*

APRIL
1958

Vol. 17, No. 2

Price \$1.25

Contributors To This Issue

BERTRAM D. WOLFE, an authority on Russia and Communism, is the author of *Three Who Made a Revolution*, 1948, and other works.

HEINRICH STAMMLER, philosopher and literary critic, is Professor of German at Northwestern University.

VLADIMIR PETROV has been a script writer for the Voice of America since 1948 and served as Editor of its Russian Language broadcasts in Munich, 1955-1957; he is the author of *Soviet Gold*, 1949, and *My Retreat from Russia*, 1950; for the past ten years he has been teaching at Yale University.

HELEN MUCHNIC is Professor of Russian Literature at Smith College and the author of a book of essays, *An Introduction to Russian Literature*, 1947.

DIMITRI VON MOHRENSCHILDT is Professor of Russian History and Literature at Dartmouth College and Editor of *The Russian Review*.

THE RUSSIAN REVIEW

An American Quarterly Devoted to Russia
Past and Present

Vol. 17

April, 1958

No. 2

☆ ☆ ☆

The Durability of Despotism in the Soviet System, <i>Bertram D. Wolfe</i>	83
Russia Between Byzantium and Utopia, <i>Heinrich Stamm-ler</i>	94
Radio Liberation, <i>Vladimir Petrov</i>	104
Vladimir Mayakovsky, <i>Helen Muchnic</i>	115
Reformers and Radicals in Pre-World War I America, <i>Dimitri von Mohrenschildt</i>	128

BOOK REVIEWS

Soviet Education for Science and Technology, <i>by Alexander G. Korol, S. P. Timoshenko</i>	139
Russian Thought and Politics, <i>ed. by Hugh McLean, Martin E. Malia, and George Fischer, Ralph T. Fisher, Jr.</i>	142
Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy, <i>by Carl J. Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski, Alexander Dallin</i>	143
Factory Management in the U.S.S.R., <i>by Joseph S. Berliner; Soviet Economic Progress, by Elsworth Raymond, Mikhail V. Condoide</i>	145
Studies in Rebellion: Belinsky, Bakunin and Herzen, <i>by E. Lampert, Martin E. Malia</i>	146
Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power, <i>by Karl H. Wittfogel, N. S. Timasheff</i>	148

Continued on Page II

The Phoenix and the Spider. A Book of Essays About Some Russian Writers and Their View of the Self, <i>by</i> Renato Poggioli, <i>Gleb Struve</i>	150
Oxford Slavonic Papers, <i>ed. by</i> S. Konovalov; Harvard Slavic Studies, <i>ed. by</i> H. G. Lunt, <i>Robert R. Maguire</i>	152
Indiana Slavic Studies, <i>ed. by</i> Michael Ginsburg and Joseph T. Shaw; Canadian Slavic Papers, <i>ed. by</i> G. S. N. Luckyj, W. J. Rose, and L. I. Strakhovsky; Slavic Folklore: A Symposium, <i>ed. by</i> Albert Bates Lord, <i>J. F. Matlock, Jr.</i>	153
Comedy in the Soviet Theatre, <i>by</i> Peter Yershov, <i>Charles</i> <i>McLane</i>	155
<i>Sudby Rossii</i> , (Russia's Destiny). Thirteen essays by Russian scholars and journalists, <i>Valentine Tschebo-</i> <i>tarioff Bill</i>	156
Errata	157

THE RUSSIAN REVIEW

Dimitri von Mohrenschildt

Editor

William Henry Chamberlin
Ralph T. Fisher, Jr.

Michael Karpovich
Warren B. Walsh

Alexis Wiren

The purpose of *The Russian Review* is to interpret the real aims and aspirations of the Russian people, as distinguished from and opposed to Soviet Communism, and to advance general knowledge of Russian culture, history and civilization. The Review invites contributions by authors of divergent views, but the opinions expressed in any individual article of this journal are not necessarily those of the editors.

Copyright 1958 by the Russian Review, Inc., 235 Baker Library, Hanover N. H. Published quarterly in January, April, July and October. Entered as second class matter at the post office in Hanover, N. H., under the Act of March 3, 1897. Additional entry at the post office in Deep River, Conn. Subscription rates: \$5.00 a year in the United States; Canada \$5.50; foreign \$6.00; single issues through Vol. 12, \$1.00; subsequent single issues \$1.25. Cumulative Index to Vols. I-X (Nov. 1941, Oct. 1951), \$.75 per copy. The contents of this publication cannot be reprinted without permission of the editors. Unsolicited manuscripts will not be returned unless accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelopes.

*The Durability of Despotism in the Soviet System**

By BERTRAM D. WOLFE

I

AT every turn the historian encounters the unpredictable: contingency, historical accident, biological accident intruding itself into history, as when the death of a history-making person brings a change of direction; changes of mood, emergence of new situations; sudden leaps that seem to turn an accretion of little events into a big one; the complicated interaction of multiple determinants on the production of every event; the unintended consequences of intended actions.

Still, history is not so open that any event is conjecturally just as likely as any other. As in the flux of things we note continuing structures, as in biology we note heredity as well as variation and mutation, so in history there is an interrelation between continuity and change.

Though all lands go through a history, and all orders and institutions are subject to continuous modification and ultimate transformation, there are some social orders or systems that are more markedly dynamic, more open, more mutable, even self-transforming, while others exhibit marked staying powers, their main outlines continuing to be discernibly the same through the most varied vicissitudes.

Though it may be difficult to determine except in retrospect just when a system may be said to change in ways so fundamental as to signify a transformation of the system, still it is possible and necessary to distinguish between self-conserving

*This article, to be published in two parts, is based on a paper read by the author at the symposium on "Changes in Soviet Society," sponsored by St. Antony's College, Oxford University, in association with the Congress for Cultural Freedom, and held at Oxford in June of 1957. [Ed.]

and self-transforming systems, between relatively open and relatively closed societies and between changes so clearly of a secondary order that they may be designated *within-system changes*, and those so clearly fundamental that they involve *changes in the system* or basic societal structure. That this distinction may be hard to make in practice, that there may be gradations and borderline cases and sudden surprises, does not relieve us of this obligation. Merely to reiterate endlessly that all things change, without attempting to make such distinctions, is to stand helpless before history-in-the-making, helpless to evaluate and helpless to react.

If we look at the Roman Empire, let us say from the time of Julius Caesar to the time of Julian the Apostate, or perhaps from Augustus to Romulus Augustulus, through its many vicissitudes and changes, we can nevertheless perceive that for three or four centuries the Roman Empire continued in a meaningful and determinable sense to be the Roman Empire. In similar fashion we can easily select a good half millennium of continuity in the Byzantine Empire. Or if we take one of the most dynamic regions, Western Europe, in one of its more dynamic periods, we can note that monarchical absolutism had a continuity of several centuries. This is the more interesting because monarchical absolutism, though it was one of the more stable and monopolistically exclusive power systems of the modern Western World, was a *multi-centered system* in which the monarch was checked and limited by his need of support from groups, corporations and interests that were organized separately and independently of the power center; the castled, armed, and propertied nobility; the Church with its spiritual authority; the burghers of the wealthy, fortified towns.

It is the presence of these independent centers of corporate organization that makes Western monarchical absolutism an exception among the centralized, long-lasting power systems. It was these limiting forces, organized independently of the central power, that managed to exact the charters and constitutions, the right to determine size and length of service of armed levies, size and purpose of monetary contributions, thus ultimately transforming the absolute monarchy into the limited, constitu-

tional monarchy of modern times. And it is from our experience in the milieu of this exceptional evolution that we derive many of our unconscious preconceptions as to the inevitability, sweep, and comparative ease of change. To correct our one-sided view it is necessary to compare the characteristics of multi-centered Western absolutism with other more "complete" and "perfect-ed" forms of single-centered power and despotism.¹

In the *samoderzhavie* of Muscovy we find a more truly single-centered power structure, stronger, more completely centralized, more monopolistic, more despotic, more unyielding in its rigid institutional framework than was the absolutism of Western Europe. The Tsar early managed to subvert the independent *boyars* and substituted for them a state-service nobility. The crown possessed enormous crown lands and state serfs. Bondage, both to the state and to the state-service nobility, was a state-ordained and state-instituted bondage, adjusted to the purposes of the recruiting sergeant and the tax-gatherer. When in the nineteenth century the Emancipation came, it came as a state-decreed "revolution from above" (Alexander's own words for it), and carried with it state supervision and the decreeing of collective responsibility to the state of the village *mir*.

To this universal state-service and state-bondage, we must add the features of Caesaro-papism, signifying a tsar- and state-dominated church in place of an independent one. In addition there was the administrative-military nature of the Russian towns, which checked the rise of an independent burgher class with independent corporate organization. Industrialization, too, came with state initiative and an enormous preponderance of state ownership and management. From Peter I to Nicholas II there were two centuries of state-ordained and fostered indus-

¹This comparison is a central part of Karl A. Wittfogel's *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power*, Yale, 1957. His attention is centered on the countries in which "the state became stronger than society" because of the need to undertake vast state irrigation and flood control works by corvée organization of the entire population, with the consequent assumption of enormous managerial functions. But his study is full of insights into modern, industry-based totalitarianism highly suggestive for the purposes of our inquiry and the theme of the present paper.

trialization, with continuing powerful state-owned and state-managed basic industry, mining, metallurgy, munitions, railroad construction and ownership, and some state commercial monopolies, all crowned with a huge and predominant state banking and credit system.

The rudiments of a more multi-centered life were just beginning to develop in this powerful, single-center organized society when World War I caused the managerial state to add to its concerns the total mobilization of men, money, materials, transport, industry, for history's first total war. The "model" country in this new form of state enterprise was wartime Germany. The system of total management by the state for total war has been variously, but not very intelligibly, termed "state capitalism" and "state socialism." In any case, Lenin was quick to welcome this development as the "final transition form." In it, as in the heritage from the Tsarist managerial autocratic state itself, he found much to build on in making his own transition to the new totalitarianism.

From Ivan the Terrible on, for a period of four centuries, "the state had been stronger than society" and had been ruled from a single power center as a military, bureaucratic, managerial state. Amidst the most varied vicissitudes, including a time of troubles, wars, conquests, invasions, peasant insurrections, palace revolutions, and revolutions from above, the powerful framework endured. Weakenings, even power vacuums, were followed by swift "*restoration*" of its basic outlines. When the strains of total war, of a magnitude beyond its inflexible powers to organize, finally caused its collapse, there came a brief interlude of the loosening of the bonds. Then Lenin, even as he revolutionized, likewise "restored" much of the four-century old heritage. Indeed, it was this "*socialist restoration of autocracy*" which Plekhanov had warned against as early as the 1880's as a danger inherent in, or at least potential to Russia, whenever the longed-for revolution should come. He warned the impatient Populists that unless all the bonds were first loosened and a free "Western" or "bourgeois-democratic" order were allowed to develop and mature, the seizure of power by would-be socialists could only lead to a "*restoration*" of Oriental,

autocratic despotism on a pseudo-socialist foundation with a pseudo-socialist "ruling caste." Things would be even worse, he warned Lenin in 1907, if this new "Inca ruling caste of Sons of the Sun" should make the fatal mistake of nationalizing the land, thus tightening more than ever the bonds that bound the peasant to the autocratic state.

The term *Oriental despotism*, applied to Russia in the course of this controversy among Russian socialists, reminds us that there are yet more durable social formations with yet greater built-in staying powers than those we have so far noted. These reckon their continuity not in centuries alone but even in millennia.

As a Chinese historian once observed to me: "Your Renaissance was a fascinating period. We had seven of them." If we substitute Restoration for Renaissance, both in the sense of restoration of vigor and restoration of basic structure, he was right.

For though China knew changes, suffered upheavals, invasions, conquests, falls of dynasties, rebellions, interregna, and times of troubles, a Chinese villager or a Chinese official of the nineteenth century, if transported to the China of two thousand or more years ago, would have found himself at home in a familiar institutional and ideological environment.

With the exception of Western monarchical absolutism, what all these enduring social structures had in common was a single power center, a managerial state, a lack of independent social orders and forms of property, an absence of checks on the flow of power to the center and the top, a powerful, self-perpetuating institutional framework.

It is the view of this paper that modern totalitarianism is one of these comparatively closed and conservative societies with a powerful and self-perpetuating institutional framework, calculated to assimilate the changes which it intends and those which are forced upon it, in such fashion that—barring explosion from within or battering down from without—the changes tend to be either inhibited or shaped and assimilated as within-system changes in a persistent system with built-in staying powers.

At first glance the word conservative may seem out of place in speaking of a society that is organized revolution. And indeed there is a striking difference between Communist totalitarianism and all previous systems of absolute, despotic, undivided (and in that sense, total) power. For whereas despotism, autocracy, and absolutism were bent on preserving the *status quo*, Communist totalitarianism is dedicated to "the future." This powerful institutional structure which tolerates no rival centers of organization has a vested interest in keeping things in flux. It maintains the omnipotence of its state and ideology by carrying on, within and by means of its power system, a permanent revolution. Like Alexander's, it is a revolution from above. Indeed, much more truly than Alexander's and much more sweepingly and exclusively is it a revolution from above. Its aim is nothing less than to keep society atomized and to create, as rapidly and as completely as the recalcitrant human material and the refractory surrounding world will permit, a new man, a new society, and a new world.

Like the earlier systems referred to, and much more than they, it possesses a state that is stronger than society. Like them it represents a system of total, in the sense of undivided, power. Like them it lacks any organized and institutionalized checks on the flow of power to the top. Like them it possesses a state-centered, state dominated, state-managed, and for the first time, a completely state-owned economy.

If the other societies are distinguished by the high specific gravity of state ownership, state control and state managerial function within the total activity of the society in question, under Communist totalitarianism, state ownership and state managerialism aspire to be total in a new sense. In the other cases, we have been contemplating total power in the sense of undivided power: power without significant rival centers of independent organization. But now we must add to the concept of *undivided power*, the concept of *all-embracing power*.

No longer does the state limit itself to being "stronger than society." It now strives to be *coextensive* with society. Whereas the earlier power systems recognize certain limitations in their capacity, to run everything, leaving room, for example,

for pocket-handkerchief-sized farms and the self-feeding of the *corvée* population, for private arts and crafts unconnected with the managerial concerns of the state, for certain types of private trade, and even finding room for village communal democracy under the watchful eye of the state overseer (what Wittfogel has aptly called "beggars democracy")—the new totalitarianism strives completely to fragment and atomize society, to co-ordinate the system of dispersed villages completely into its centralized power system, to eliminate even the small private parcel of the *kolkhoznik*, already reduced from a "pocket handkerchief" to a mere swatch.

For the first time a total-power system in the earlier sense of undivided and unchallenged power aspires to be totalist or *totalitarian* in the further sense of all-embracing power as well, and to convert the state-stronger-than-society into the state-coextensive-with-society.

We cannot deduce much from a comparison with other modern totalitarianisms. For historical and physical reasons Italian Fascism was more totalist in aspiration than in realization. And, though Nazism and Stalinist Communism suggestively moved towards each other, Nazism did not last long enough to complete its evolution. But it did live long enough to dispose of certain illusions concerning the supposed incompatibility of totalitarianism with certain aspects of modern life.

Thus it is widely held that the monopoly of total power and the attempt to embrace the totality of social life and activity are incompatible with modern industry and advanced technology. But Germany adopted totalitarianism when it was the foremost country of Europe in industry and technology. This should also dispose of the idea that totalitarianism is the appropriate form for industrializing.

Indeed, it is precisely modern technology, with its all-embracing means of communication, its high speed transmission of commands and reports and armed force to and from any point in a country, its mass communication and mass conditioning techniques and the like, which for the first time makes it possible for total (undivided) power to aspire to be totalist (all-embracing) power. That is what Herzen foreboded when he

wrote: "Some day Jinghis Khan will return with the telegraph." If total power tends to arise wherever the state is stronger than society, totalitarian power can rule over a great area and in great depth only where the state is both stronger than society and in possession of all the resources of modern technology.

Closely akin to the illusion of the incompatibility of totalitarianism with modern technology is the view that totalitarianism is "in the long run" (a run not generally conceived of as very long despite the slow geologic time implied in the popular metaphor of "erosion") incompatible with universal literacy, with advanced technological training, and with widespread "higher" or secondary school education. Once more it is Germany that serves to remind us that one of the most highly literate and technologically trained peoples in the history of man adopted Nazism when that people was both universally literate and possessed a high proportion of scientists, scholars, and persons with secondary school training.

Whereas in pre-literate societies it took long periods of conflict followed by ages of the development of tradition to indoctrinate a people into customary acceptance of centralized total power and customary acceptance of their lot as obedient servants of a managerial-priestly bureaucracy, Nazi ideology spread like wild-fire among a people who already knew how to read. For modern totalitarianism requires that everybody be able to read so that all can be made to read the same thing at the same moment. Not the mere ability to read, but the possibility of choosing between alternative types of reading, is a potential—and only a potential—liberating influence.

When Stalin died in 1953, Bolshevism was fifty years old. Its distinctive views on the significance of organization, of centralization, and of the guardianship or dictatorship of a vanguard or elite, date from Lenin's programmatic writings of 1902 (*Where to Begin; What is to Be Done?*). His separate machine and his authoritarian control of it dates from the split of 1903.

During these fifty years Bolshevism had had only two authoritative leaders, each of whom in turn set the stamp of his personality upon it. Lenin, as we have suggested, inherited much from Tsarist autocracy, yet, his totalitarianism is different

in principle from the old Muscovite despotism. He regarded himself as a devout, orthodox Marxist, building upon and enlarging some aspects of Marx's conceptions while ignoring, altering or misrepresenting others. His Marxism was so different from Marx's that a not unfriendly commentator, Charles Rappoport, called it *Marxisme à la Tartare*. Stalin's Leninism, in turn, differed enough from Lenin's that we might term it *Marxisme à la mode Caucasienne*. Yet there is discernibly more continuity between Stalin and Lenin than between Lenin and Marx. The changes Stalin introduced involved the continuation and enlargement of certain elements in Lenin's methods and conceptions, along with the alteration of others. He inherited and used, now in Leninist, now in his own "Stalinist" fashion, a powerful institutional framework involving a party machine, a state machine, a doctrine of infallibility, an ideology, and the determination to extend the totalization of power to transform the Russian into the "New Communist Man," and win the world for Communism.

With Stalin's death, once more there are new leaders or a new leader. It is impossible to believe that this new personal imprint will not make alterations in Stalinism as Stalin did in Leninism. But it seems to me useful, after four years of unsystematic talk about changes, that we should remind ourselves at the outset, that the "new men" are not so new, that they have inherited a going concern with a powerful institutional framework, a dynamics and a momentum already powerful and powerfully established, and that actually we are examining changes in—or rather I think we should say *within*—a single-centered, closed, highly centralized society run by a power that is both total in the sense of undivided and totalist in its aspirations. Such societies, as I have indicated, have tended to exhibit built-in staying powers and a perdurability despite changes like the death of a despot, an oligarchial interregnum, or a struggle for succession.

As for these "new men," they are, of course, Stalin's men. They would not now have any claim to power over a great nation were it not that they managed to be the surviving close lieutenants at the moment of Stalin's death.

It is my impression that they are smallish men. There is a principle of selection in personal despotisms which surrounds the despot with courtiers, sycophants, executants, yes-men, and rules out original and challenging minds. This almost guarantees a crisis of succession where there is no system of legitimacy, until a new dictator emerges. Moreover, the heirs are no longer young (Khrushchev is 64) so that a fresh crisis of succession may well supervene before the present muted and restricted crisis is over.

I would not consider these "smallish men" too small, however, for when you have a sixth of the earth, 200,000,000 population, a total state economy, and a great empire to practice on, you learn other trades besides that of courtier or faction lieutenant. Even so, not one of them at present exhibits the originality and the high charge of energy and intellect that characterized Lenin. Nor the grosser but no less original demonic force of Stalin.

Whenever a despot dies, there is a universal expectation of change. The new men have had to take account of it, and have taken advantage of it to introduce changes which the old tyrant made seem desirable even to his lieutenants: to rationalize elements of a system which has no organized, independent force to change it from below, and to make limited concessions while they are consolidating their power. But the institutional framework they have inherited is one they intend to maintain. It is a solid and durable political system dominating a society that has been totally fragmented or atomized, and the state, or rather the party which is its core is the controlling core of all extant organizations.²

Some of the parts of this power machine are now more than a half-century old, others date from 1917, others from the consolidation of the Stalinist regime in industry, agriculture, politics and culture in the thirties. But even these last have been established for more than two decades.

In short, what the epigoni have inherited is no small heritage: an atomized society; a centralized, monolithic, monopolistic party; a single-party state; a regime of absolute force supple-

²This does not apply to the Empire but only to the Soviet Union. In general in this article I have omitted any consideration of the Empire.

mented by persuasion or by continuous psychological warfare upon its people; a managerial bureaucracy accustomed to take orders and execute them (with a little elbowroom for regularized evasion); a centrally managed, totally state-owned and state-regulated economy including farms, factories, banks, transport and communications, and all trade domestic and foreign; an established dogmatic priority for the branches of industry which underlie the power of the state; a bare subsistence economy for the bulk of the producers; a completely statized and "collectivized" agriculture which, though it has never solved the problem of productivity, continues to reach out after greater gigantism and statification and threatens to reduce even the small parcel to a mere "garden adornment"; a powerful, if one-sided, forced-tempo industry centralized even beyond the point of rationality from the standpoint of totalitarianism itself; the techniques and momentums of a succession of Five-Year Plans of which the present is the Sixth; a completely managed and controlled culture (except for the most secret recesses of the spirit which even modern technology cannot reach); a monopoly of all the means of expression and communication; a state-owned system of "criticism"; an infallible doctrine stemming from infallible authorities, interpreted and applied by an infallible party led by an infallible leader or clique of infallible leaders, in any case by an infallible "summit"; a method of advance by zigzags toward basically unchanging goals; a system of promotion, demotion, correction of error, modification of strategy and tactics, and elimination of differences, by fiat from the summit, implemented by purges of varying scope and intensity; a commitment to continuing revolution from above until the Soviet subject has been remade according to the blueprint of the men in the Kremlin, and until Communism has won the world.

It is in this heritage that these men were formed. In this they believe. It is the weight and power and internal dynamics of this heritage that in part inhibits, in part shapes such changes as these men undertake, and enters as a powerful shaping force into the changes which they make involuntarily.

(To be continued)

Russia Between Byzantium and Utopia

By HEINRICH STAMMLER

IT was with hesitation that I accepted an invitation to contribute a few remarks to the discussion of "Toynbee and Russia." Almost too much has already been said about Toynbee's approach to rendering history meaningful in moral and religious terms. Innumerable articles have been written to point out Toynbee's errors and inconsistencies. His whole method has been condemned as arbitrary and anti-rational. Historians like the Dutch professor P. Geyl, and philosophers like the Germans Karl Lowith and Ernst Zahn have called Toynbee to account on the ground of his elusive and unscientific ways in arranging and interpreting his facts. Also the general historiosophic deductions Toynbee claims to be able to draw from these facts have been questioned again and again. The well-known Ashley Montagu contacted a group of the most distinguished experts in the field of history, asking them to express their critical opinions concerning Toynbee's merits and shortcomings. The fruit of this undertaking is a volume containing a most formidable array of well-founded attacks on Toynbee as a craftsman and philosopher. These essays were augmented by the trenchant exposure of Toynbee's misconceptions about Russian history, written by Dr. J. Clarkson for this journal.¹

My reluctance to enter the fray is easy to explain. I find myself in the precarious plight of a person with divided sympathies. On the one hand, I cannot but feel that the time-hallowed approach to history as *Heilsgeschehen* does not entirely lack justification, even in our times. Moreover, I am inclined to share Toynbee's viewpoint that religious beliefs are the most

¹"Toynbee on Slavic and Russian History," *The Russian Review*, July, 1956.

important motivating force in human civilization, the specific traits of which are frequently determined by the theological, ethical, and institutional incarnations of faith as evolved by a given society. I also happen to think that even demographic and economic factors which, at first glance, seem to be inexplicable in religious terms can often be traced back to basic religious attitudes and religiously inspired ethics. In the field of economic and social history this has been vigorously demonstrated by Max Weber, Tawney, and others. The examples of Hinduism and the Roman Catholic Church in their attitudes toward the family, birth control, and procreation, in my opinion, throw much light on certain demographic problems which even now are very much with us. On the other hand, I cannot deny that the application of these and related principles and premises in Toynbee's *Study of History* has filled me with the gravest misgivings as to their validity in his discussion of the part played by Byzantine Orthodoxy in Russian history.

When all is said and done, the disagreement between Professor Toynbee and other experts can be reduced to a misunderstanding, e.g. one between those who believe that, in the words of Berdyaev, "history is in truth the path to another world. It is in this sense that its content is religious," and there are those who are convinced that the writings of history must be conceived as a thoroughly scientific business, with as little myth and metaphysics as possible.

It is awkward, however, to observe how Toynbee tries to straddle the fence between the two camps. On the one hand, he insists on the empirical method, laying claim to all the scientific panoply required by the dominant spirit of the age as well as by his craft. But on the other hand, in his search for a meaning of history he transcends the immanentism demanded by a strictly scientific enquiry. Moreover, his basic metaphysical assumptions induce him to marshal the incredible amount of data he has so diligently exhumed from the records of bygone ages in order to fit his idea of what the underlying meaning of history is or ought to be. Religions and metaphysical systems which cannot hold their own without the buttress of historical fact lead an unhealthy existence. Empirical in-

vestigation which is guided by preconceived religious or metaphysical notions will sooner or later result in a distortion of the facts. For these reasons, the great majority of experts in the field of historical research have called attention to the hollowness of Professor Toynbee's pretension to have based his system on empiricism and logical deduction. So it is not surprising that the religious convictions and ideas he propounds also remain strangely pale and cloudy, running the danger of being lost in the welter of a theologically highly dubious syncretism. Consequently, Karl Lowith in his book *Meaning in History* states that "Toynbee is neither an empirical historian nor a good theologian. Instead of arguing with Augustine and all the Church Fathers that Christianity is the latest news because it is the good news and because God revealed himself in history only once and for all, he argues on astronomical (i.e. scientific) grounds."

My quarrel, then, with Toynbee is provoked by his not being inspired sufficiently by religion in his reasonings. He has, it is true, the tremendous courage to proclaim, in this age of unprecedented popular sway of science, belief in the transcendent character of the historical process. But instead of taking full advantage of this position which gives him spiritual authority to judge history, he is apparently still overawed by the concept of sciences and is taking refuge in descriptive procedure based on empirical knowledge. Thus the outcome is a strange mixture of a basically unscientific, or better, "trans-scientific" approach, with an attempt at presenting history in terms of documented, verifiable truth. Apart from a few publications devoted to problems of current foreign policy, everything Toynbee has written is characterized by this conflict between the two concepts of truth: the spontaneous verity of inner experience as well as religious revelation, and the concept of truth as derived from the methods of logical discourse and the laboratory. As yet, Dr. Toynbee has not been able, certainly not in his speculations entitled *An Historian's Approach to Religion*, to arrive at a satisfactory reconciliation of these two seemingly incompatible concepts.

I will not deal here with particular errors committed by Toynbee in the descriptive passages of his monumental study.

This has been amply done by expert historians. Two of these, Mr. Barraclough and Mr. Coulborn, whose essays on certain aspects of the *Study of History* can be read in Mr. Montagu's symposium, passed the following devastating verdict on Toynbee's portraiture of Russian history: according to Professor Barraclough, "Dr. Toynbee's interpretation of Russian history is arbitrary and unacceptable . . .," while Mr. Coulborn remarks in an aside that "Toynbee's treatment of Byzantium and Russia is a lamentable distortion of the facts to fit a formula." The shortcoming these noted scholars are mainly concerned with is the unsatisfactory and inconsistent way in which Toynbee deals with his facts. The deficiencies of his work on the factual side have been shown up also in other essays of Mr. Montagu's volume. As a rule, false or spurious generalizations almost always arise as a consequence of an all-to-hasty gleaning of disparate facts. But just as often, an inaccurate overall picture of a given civilization or society leads to a faulty marshalling of facts, caused by the desire to justify the colors and contours of the preconceived panorama. I believe that just this is the case with Toynbee's lucubrations dealing with Russia, her history and her religion.

In his penetrating article about Toynbee's treatment of Hellenism as it survived in the Byzantine empire and church (*The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, Christmas issue, 1956), the Very Reverend Eusebius A. Stephanou has exposed the confusion and inconsistency of the historians' approach to this indeed formidable problem. The following lines are intended to be an extension of the argument applied to Russian conditions. It appears that Toynbee has fallen prey to the present-day division of the world into two hostile camps. Throughout his entire work he displays a marked propensity toward an absolutization of this contemporary clash between Atlantic liberalism and Bolshevik totalitarianism. I will not elaborate on the inadmissibility of this approach. Others have done it with more competency than I could ever do. But an obvious corollary of this tendency is Toynbee's inexorable partition of Christendom into Roman West and Orthodox East to which Russia belongs. I do not think that recent research in Byzan-

tine as well as Russian political, social, and ecclesiastic history warrants the assertion of such an unbridgeable gulf. As regards the religious aspects of the problem, it is a truism that more parallels can be discovered between Roman and Greek Catholicism than between Catholicism as a whole and Protestantism, particularly in its Calvinistic and sectarian embodiments. The critic may admit, however, that Toynbee's Anglican background enabled him to view Roman Catholicism and Protestantism as Western phenomena which he then opposed to Eastern Orthodoxy. But this does not detract from the fact, both theologically and historically demonstrable, that the two patterns of Catholicism, Byzantine as well as Roman, are offshoots from the same stem and must be seen and judged as such. It makes a considerable difference whether one uses the terms "Roman Catholicism" and "Eastern (or Byzantine) Orthodoxy," or prefers to speak of Eastern and, respectively, Western Catholicism. The latter version has an altogether different ring.

The Eurasian school has rendered valuable service to Russian history by calling attention to the intrinsic role of the Asiatic or Turanian element in Russia's historical development. The historian, however, must not be blind to the fact that even under the Tartar yoke Russia was never wholly excluded from Europe, nor was she ever a constituent part of an Asian civilization. The point of departure for all further generalizations about the significance of Russian history is the decisive event of Russia's entrance into the great family of Christendom with its common heritage of Biblical religion and the culture of classical antiquity. Wladimir Weidle, in his brilliant study *Russia: Absent and Present*, has grasped the very core of the problem by stating "The initial data were the baptism of Russia and the cultural tradition of Greece and Christianity which she received by way of Constantinople. It was something the Russian people were perfectly free to reject; but if they declined to do so they had, nonetheless, to make themselves somehow into a European nation, in order to become an organic part of Christendom."

It is not difficult to find proof for this contention. The Russian Slavophiles, their very life story, their ideas as expressed in their writings and letters, bear testimony to the ideological

as well as psychological fact that a deep sympathy with and admiration for European culture could not be obliterated by what Weidle calls "the momentous contrast (between medieval Muscovy and the Westernized Petrine Empire) that was later to seize the imaginations of all." Slavophilism, though expressly identifying true Russian nationality with devotion for the Orthodox Church and the teachings of the Greek Fathers, in its later phase, nevertheless, became tainted by Western romantic, linguistic, and exclusive nationalism. A man like Constantin Leontev, on the other hand, who to some extent sympathized with the Slavophiles, though he was not an accepted member of their circles, is living evidence of the compatibility in one person's mind of a most acute awareness of the positive significance of Russian Byzantinism with a passionate love and keen appreciation of what he considered the most creative phases in European history and culture. It is not necessary here to dwell on Leontev's theories concerning the laws of historical and cultural development, influenced as they were by his intense preoccupation with the aesthetic element in life as well as by Danilevsky's "biologism." Suffice it to say that in the later stage of his life, when he became doubtful about the exuberant Pan-Slavic illusions of the younger Slavophiles, he declared firmly that the only justification for the historical existence of the Russian people was to be found in their Byzantine patrimony. But even toward the very end of his life, when he actually had taken monastic vows, he did not forget his ardent love for what seemed to him great, unique, and colorful in the past of the West. This ability of an outstanding personality, distinguished by both an elevated sense of culture and creative gifts of no mean degree to live and participate in the Western sphere of civilization and at the same time to cherish the Byzantine legacy bequeathed to his people, demonstrates that the world of Rome and the world of Constantinople must be much more closely-related than historiosophical speculations would make us believe. The integration of Russia under Peter and his successors, and also the absorption of those Byzantine provinces in Southeast Europe which had been under the Ottoman yoke, and eventually of Turkey herself into the orbit of Europe, show

that all interpretations overstressing the cleavage between Rome and the New Rome on the shores of the Bosphorus stand in need of substantial correction.

Likewise, Toynbee's helplessness when confronted with the problem of Bolshevik rule in Russia is due to overemphasis on the separation between Christendom's Orient and Occident. Although even under Communist domination the Russian people have succeeded in preserving many of their distinctive traits, aspirations, and specific abilities, it should be apparent by now that it will never do to explain Bolshevism in terms of the Russian national character, thereby forcing an expansionist revolutionary movement into the Procrustean bed of Byzantinism. Hannah Arendt's attempt to interpret Bolshevism, a variant of twentieth-century totalitarianism, in terms of the exceptional conditions of an age and generation spiritually and morally not yet adjusted to industrial mass existence (a point of view which has much in common with the late Professor Vysheslavitsev's apposite analysis of the crisis of industrial civilization) seems to be a much more fruitful approach to the elucidation of this phenomenon so frightening by its very novelty. Bolshevik history has only certain tangential, geographic, and ethnic points in common with the history of Russia, the latter, for the time being, having come to a premature end in the October coup d'état of 1917. This, in spite of the rise of Stalin, whose alleged "Russian nationalism" evaluated far too optimistically by Toynbee, must not be taken at face value. The history of the Russian people under Communist domination has not yet been written. So it would be methodically useful to make a clear distinction between the history of the Bolshevik regime and Russian history proper. They are mutually conditioned, but by no means identical.

If Toynbee had taken these or related points of view into consideration, he never would have felt tempted to draw such odd comparisons as the following (in *Civilization on Trial*): "In this Byzantine totalitarian [*sic!*] state, the Church may be Christian or Marxian so long as it submits to being the secular government's tool. The issue between Trotsky, who wanted to make the Soviet Union an instrument for furthering the cause

of the Communist world revolution, and Stalin, who wanted to make Communism an instrument for furthering the interests of the Soviet Union, is the old issue on which battle was once joined between St. John Chrysostom and the Empress Eudoxia and between Theodore of Studium and the Emperor Constantine VI. . . . Under the Hammer and Sickle, as under the Cross, Russia is still 'Holy Russia' and Moscow still 'The Third Rome.' *Tamen usque recurret.*" It may be mentioned here that, apart from the patent absurdity of the comparison, the quotation reveals an inability or unwillingness, shocking in a religious-minded historian, to grasp the very essence of the Church and its significance which rests upon apostolic succession, the idea of the *corpus mysticum*, and grace, not to be forfeited even by personal unworthiness of individual priests or the forcible subordination of the Church to secular authorities, and, it goes without saying, wholly independent from any political contingencies. Thus, Toynbee's parallelization of St. John Chrysostom and Theodore the Studite with Leon Trotsky must be rejected not only for historical, but also for theological reasons.

Historiography as a pragmatic undertaking, a mere finding, assembling, and arranging of verifiable facts, refined by the incessant application of the critical method, may be a scientific postulate. But it will certainly not satisfy the puzzled present-day reader, who thirsts for some light to be shed on the significance of all the tremendous changes, upheavals, and conflicts the victim of which he so often turns out to be. In his refusal to reduce history to the bare skeleton of causally connected facts and conditioned collective reactions, I am inclined to see the undisputed superiority of Toynbee's Herculean labors to much that passes for scientific history writing. Nevertheless, the student of Russian history, political, social, and cultural, cannot but take exception to the unfortunate choice of highly debatable premises for the interpretation and explanation of a frequently perplexing series of events more often than not overshadowed by unmitigated gloom and impending disaster. It is regrettable that Toynbee did not take over from Spengler the concept of "pseudomorphosis" which, at least in the case of Russia, would have been so helpful in dealing with the

baffling problem of the rise and success of the Bolshevik regime on Russian soil.

Another source of dissatisfaction is a suspicion of a more theological nature, aroused particularly by Toynbee's reflections on the role of religion in history. Here, he sometimes is dangerously close to the typically middle-class assumption that religion in history ought to become a vehicle for the furtherance of an immanent fulfillment of the historical process, or, in other words, of progress. History then tends no longer to be viewed and judged as "*Heilsgeschehen*," that is, a process ordained by Providence and fulfilled under conditions which transcend the process itself, but as a process which of itself brings forth the seeds of salvation. This quest for a culture-redeeming religion has apparently caused the curious one-sidedness with which Toynbee tenaciously holds on to the cliché of a sterile, "ossified" Orthodox Church completely under state domination. Research in ecclesiastic history, however, shows that the problem is much more complex than a study of Toynbee's work would reveal. Among other desiderata, a thorough discussion of character, function, and repercussions of Hesychast asceticism, the educative and devotional role of the Book of Philokalia, and the part played by the Russian *Startsy* in the formation of a national pattern of piety would have been indispensable in order to give a more satisfactory answer to the question of the Orthodox attitude toward state and society. This fascinating subject has been treated in detail by the late Max Scheler in his essays dealing with the gradual emergence of Russian national traits under the tutelage of the Orthodox Church. He coined the significant term "holy irony" for the ambivalent behavior of the average Russian in relation to his civil and military authorities, an ambivalence between obedience and contempt, inspired by the other-worldly teaching of the Church. It would not be impossible to unearth in the social and religious history of the West as well, parallel examples of this quietistic type of indifference, seasoned so often by an admixture of concealed derision and pity for the sinful arrogance in the representatives of secular institutions.

In 1949, however, seven years before Toynbee's *An Historian's Approach to History* appeared, Karl Lowith had stressed the futility of any immanent explanations of history: "The problem of history as a whole is unanswerable within its own perspective. Historical processes as such do not bear the least evidence of a comprehensive and ultimate meaning. History as such has no outcome. There never has been and never will be an immanent solution of the problems of history, for man's historical experience is one of steady failure." The corollary to this irrefutable statement is contained in Berdyaev's book *The Meaning of History*, a profound metaphysical analysis of the problem of history, which Toynbee, to his own discomfiture, seems to have neglected or not discovered. In the chapter "The Doctrine of Progress and the Goal of History" we find the words which can best serve to terminate my ruminations: "Disappointed in its expectations, feeling itself imprisoned within the circle of history, it [mankind] realizes that its problem cannot be solved within the process of history itself, but only on a transcendental plane . . . We must admit within the hermetic circle of history the superhistorical energy, the irruption within the relations of terrestrial phenomena of the celestial noumenon . . . This concept of the ineluctable end of history is at once the final conclusion and fundamental premise of the metaphysics of history."

Radio Liberation

By VLADIMIR PETROV

WHETHER we recognize it or not, the field of psychological warfare has been and remains one in which, as in the military and diplomatic fields, the great global struggle continues to develop. The reluctance of the United States to give the necessary priority to the struggle for the minds of people in contested areas stems primarily from the traditional Anglo-Saxon disbelief in, and suspicion of propaganda in general together with the tacit admission of inability to use the various media of communication as an effective instrument of foreign policy. At the same time, we freely recognize that Communist propaganda in vast areas of the world has succeeded in putting great pressure on the West and has unfavorably affected the position of the United States.

It may be argued that to be successful, propaganda must be a reflection of a successful policy; that wherever the existing popular trend runs against the West it is easy for the Communists to move in and to make bad things worse, while the Western counter-effort necessarily faces an up-hill fight. This, however, does not justify American inaction in areas where the popular trend runs against the Communists. That such areas exist is common knowledge, i.e. Soviet satellite countries of Central and Eastern Europe, and, to a large extent, the Soviet Union itself.

In the fight for human minds in Asian or African countries the United States is at a distinct disadvantage. Associated in the public mind with colonial powers, the United States does not possess the necessary moral stature, or sufficiently valid issues needed to counteract the Communist propaganda which continuously exploits the highly emotional attitudes of the natives. But the situation in countries dominated by the Communists is in reverse: there, Western democratic tradition is valid, our moral stand against Communist expansion is appreci-

ated. The Hungarians, the Poles, the Russians themselves, are much more concerned with oppression in their own lands than they are with the feelings of the Indonesians toward the Dutch. Indians or Arabs may look upon the Soviet regime as the one which succeeded within a relatively short period of time in transforming relatively backward Russia into a first-rank world power. But a Pole, who only a few years ago enjoyed a much higher standard of living and much more freedom, has his own ideas about Soviet achievements. And a Russian, who despite Sputniks continues to live austere, with constantly suppressed freedoms, has a different opinion about the advantages of Communism than a downtrodden sharecropper in Calabria.

In addition, the population of Communist-dominated lands is acutely aware of the distortions and outright lies of the Communist press and radio. Plain truth and fair presentation of news are unknown luxuries for these people. They are also badly in need of honest and rational explanations of both international developments and events guiding their own lives at home.

This is, therefore, the only field where a Western propaganda effort can count on considerable success. At the same time this is exactly the field most neglected by the United States government. The Voice of America, like BBC before it, has been completely withdrawn from the propaganda field. Any attempt to exploit internal difficulties and conflicts of the Communist regimes to our advantage, is ruled out. Increasingly sensitive to accusations emanating from Moscow, the Voice of America seems to lean over backwards in an effort to prove that its broadcasts are in no way meant to cause trouble in the U.S.S.R. or in the satellite nations.

A somewhat different attitude exists in the two privately financed American operations in Germany: Radio Free Europe which broadcasts to East European countries and Radio Liberation which broadcasts to the Soviet Union. The fact that they are private does not mean that they are completely free from supervision of the United States Government. One remembers the clamor which arose in this country in the wake of the Hungarian revolution caused by a suggestion that Radio Free

Europe had somehow influenced the shooting in the streets of Budapest and had given the insurgents hope of American help. Investigations followed and although no proof of such promises was discovered, RFE was forced to adopt a much milder line toward Communist regimes of Eastern Europe.

Radio Liberation was not touched by the controversy. There were no uprisings in the U.S.S.R. to be ascribed to its efforts. But the reaction towards RFE is significant: even private radio-operations are not supposed to stir things up in the Communist Empire. Private or official, the West is set to prove to the Communist leaders that it is not aiming at the destruction of their regimes. What, then, is it after?

Radio Liberation, stationed in Munich with transmitters in Lampertheim, is an impressive operation. On March 1, 1958 it celebrated the fifth anniversary of its existence. Its broadcasting facilities during this period have grown from one 10-kilowatt transmitter to nine transmitters totaling 300-kilowatts, plus four additional transmitters in the Far East (totaling 120 kwts.) broadcasting to the Soviet Far East.

Supported by the American Committee for Liberation with headquarters in New York, it was started and, for three years, supervised by Mr. Manning Williams, an expert in Soviet affairs. In 1956 Mr. Williams was replaced by a professional radio broadcasting director, the former head of Radio Free Asia, Mr. Richard Bertrandias. Radio Liberation has assembled a staff consisting of 175 émigrés from the Soviet Union, 75 Americans, and many German technicians. Its operation is further supported by the radio division of the American Committee in New York (10 Americans and 29 Russians, among whom are a number of experienced writers and journalists).

The technical side of the operation is up to the standards of the best American know-how. Several top scientists constantly work on the problem of how to overcome continuous Soviet jamming. Thanks to their research, the technical quality of the broadcasts has improved greatly.

The Radio Liberation building on the outskirts of Munich contains, among other things, probably the best Western monitoring service of the Soviet domestic broadcasts, and a very

competent research department. It also has at its disposal the library and the personnel of another organization sponsored by the American Committee—the Munich Institute for the Study of the U.S.S.R.

It would be only fair to say, however, that the final product of RL—its actual broadcasts—does not match its scientific and technical facilities. The trouble is not so much in a lack of able script writers and editors, for despite a known shortage of good Russian writers among the émigrés, RL has managed to collect many people qualified to do the job. The weaknesses of the operation stem primarily from confusion and basic contradictions in the over-all policy.

If one asks an official of RL: "For whom does the radio speak?" One gets the ready reply: "It is the free voice of former citizens of the U.S.S.R. who are trying to help their fellow-countrymen at home to achieve liberation." In a very limited sense it may be called "an émigré radio" because the people who write scripts and broadcast from the studios in Munich are refugees from the Soviet Union. The émigré editors also take part in policy discussions of the American advisory personnel; their opinions are sought by the administration. However, they do not formulate the policy of the radio.

The émigrés working for RL are salaried employees. They are individuals who do not represent any specific émigré group. Earlier attempts by the American Committee to create a united émigré front have been an admitted failure and have long since been abandoned. Participation of individual émigrés in discussions with the American advisors at RL is limited to specific day-by-day topics; the over-all policy is decided at a higher, strictly American level, and more often than not meets with little approval from the émigrés.

This does not necessarily make the policy wrong, for the often embittered émigrés have traditionally had difficulty in reaching agreement among themselves even in trivial matters. But the latter argument cannot justify the pretense that RL is the "voice of the emigration." It can be added that this deceives no one in the Soviet Union either: first, because the Russians realize that the émigrés simply cannot have a radio of their own;

second, because the content of the RL broadcasts obviously does not reflect the thinking of the political émigrés, such as it is or such as it can be imagined by the Soviet listeners.

As of now, RL has 9 language desks, representing 18 nationalities of the Soviet Union: Russian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Georgian, Armenian, Azerbaijanian, Tatar, Uzbek, Kazakh, Kirgiz, Turkmen, Tadzhik, Ossetin, Adyge-Kabardin, Karachay-Balkar, Chechen-Ingush, Avar, and Kalmyk. Whatever the reasons for selecting these particular languages were, each desk now has its own time on the air, ranging from 15 minutes to one hour a day. Each broadcast is repeated several times daily, adding up to a total of about 200 hours. However, with all its variety of languages, RL devotes about three quarters of its total time on the air to broadcasts in Russian.

This multiplicity of languages is another contradictory element in RL operation. It creates the false appearance that the émigrés from the U.S.S.R., regardless of their nationality, speak with the same voice and pursue the same goals. The absurdity of such a pretense is obvious to anyone who has any knowledge of émigré politics.

It can hardly be questioned that local nationalism has been one of the potential forces which has undermined the stability of the Soviet state ever since the Revolution. On the language desks of RL there are many ardent nationalists who would be happy to strike up the "separation-from-Russia" tune and who dislike the Russians—as Russians—for the alleged oppression of their native lands.

But the established policy of RL has been "non-predeterminism." The assumption is that when and if the day of liberation comes, the peoples of the U.S.S.R. will decide for themselves whether they wish to remain within the Russian state or go their separate ways. In the meantime, the American policymakers insist that there should be no attacks on the Russians as a nation. The émigrés manning the non-Russian desks largely abide by this requirement, thus depriving the justification for their political existence as representatives of the minority groups of Russia.

As if in compensation, the Russian-language broadcasts at the same time are obliged to abstain from any advocacy of "Russia—Great and Indivisible"; until recently the very word "Russia" was banned, and by implication, the imperial nature of the country is condemned. A compromise may be a fine thing but not when applied in the field of propaganda. A "No Great Russia" clause rules out the chance for RL to appeal to the *Russian* nationalist elements inside the country. Moreover, unlike the people working on the minority desks, the Russians on RL have, at least officially, no clear concept of the future of their country; all advocates of "Russia Great and Indivisible" left the radio-station a long time ago.

The charges, often heard among Russian émigrés, that the Americans who conduct RL are "anti-Russian," and that their goal is the dismemberment of Russia, can hardly be substantiated. In fact, many non-Russian broadcasts have strictly "symbolic" significance. So far as is known, the broadcasts (including those in Uzbek, Kirgiz, Tadzhik, Turkmen, and Kazakh) do not even reach beyond the Urals and the Caspian Sea. Most Americans working on RL know and appreciate Russian culture but have only the vaguest notions about the history and the cultures of the minorities. Nevertheless, the attempt of RL to have its cake and eat it too has resulted in markedly lower returns in proportion to the effort expended.

It is obvious that within one organization it is impossible to appeal at the same time to the nationalist feelings of the Russians and to the minority separatists. But while it can be argued that the nationality complications at RL only reflect those inside the U.S.S.R., this cannot serve as an excuse for a propaganda operation which must strive for maximum effectiveness. The Anglo-Saxon principle of political compromise, no matter how beneficial it may be in application to émigré politics inevitably fails when there is a need to stir up thoughts and emotions among the huge and largely apathetic masses of the Soviet population.

It may be said that the policy of RL, as determined by its American staff in Munich, New York and elsewhere reflects the shortcomings of the American policy toward the Soviet Union

in general. Created in the wake of the Korean War in the first year of the Eisenhower administration, the radio was christened "Liberation." Yet, the officers managing it freely admit that the liberation of "the subjugated peoples of the Soviet Union" is not a direct goal of the radio. In fact, for quite a while they have been in search of a substitute name which would reflect more accurately what they are after. In the meantime, a temporary solution is found in a new interpretation of the term "liberation." The American Committee states: "The Liberation movement is the interaction of pressures toward freedom in the Soviet orbit with the forces of freedom in the free world, looking to the displacement of the Communist despotism by a system of political liberty."¹

Ever since the first signs of the "thaw" became visible in Russia it was decided that the task of RL is to encourage the various developments toward liberalization of the Soviet regime. As its main target RL has selected the upper strata of Soviet society, those who have a vested interest in the preservation of the Soviet system in general but who allegedly want to improve it by making it more efficient and more civilized. Leaving aside the question of the wisdom of betting on this particular horse, one may well ask whether in the radio-business it is possible to be selective in such a way. One never knows who is actually listening to a broadcast; there are no special wave lengths for Soviet directors, professional people, and the elite in general. And, if one is to recognize the existing frictions within the Soviet society, it would be obvious that an attempt to woo the privileged class would result in resentment on the part of all who oppose it.

Fortunately, RL has not been too consistent in its policy. While appealing to the elite and urging it to demand more and more concessions from the Soviet government, RL has undertaken such a worthy project as broadcasting page by page the book of Milovan Djilas, *The New Class*, which bitterly attacks that same New Class.

¹"A Fresh Look at Liberation," N.Y., American Committee for Liberation, 1957, p. 6.

It may be added that the all-binding "non-predeterminism" which, as stated earlier, has been affecting the issue of Great Russia *vs.* separatist forces of the minorities, plays its deadening role in matters of general policy as well. RL takes no stand on most of the important problems of Russia's future. No one argues for or against socialism, for instance, whether in its democratic or its Soviet form; for or against monarchy, or any other form of the government. Among numerous taboos are present and past political personalities from Lenin to Khrushchev. Great care is taken to eliminate everything that might possibly alienate the "new class" of the Soviet Union; criticism is kept on a very high, i.e., very general uninspiring level, is moderate in tone and limited in scope.

Since most of the policies of RL consist of "don'ts" and since the writers and editors are reduced to platitudes, RL suffers from a distinct lack of character. It has been impossible, for obvious reasons, to assess the effectiveness of RL broadcasts. Letters from listeners have been few and although many of them were "favorable," they have not contained a sufficient amount of intelligent reaction to enable one to judge the effectiveness of the broadcasting. Among the several hundred people interviewed in the West since the beginning of RL operation, tourists, defectors, etc., the number of regular Soviet listeners of RL has been noticeably small. Still, a few conclusions can be drawn:

1. The broadcasts of RL, despite their moderation, are not liked by those who consider themselves loyal Soviet citizens. And again because of their moderation they are not liked by those who oppose the Soviet regime either.

2. The contradictions in the policy of RL have been detected by a number of those who sympathize with the idea of liberation. One reaction of an engineer from Moscow can be summarized as follows: "It is true that they don't advocate the dismemberment of Russia. But why do they have to broadcast in non-Russian languages? What's in the back of their minds?"

A Soviet sportsman, a member of the Komsomol, noted: "They pretend to be an émigré radio. What fool would believe

it? Sure, the Americans are behind it and are using the defectors as tools for their own ends. But why should they be hiding it? What are they after?"

While most of those interviewed express a preference for the BBC or the Voice of America (as being "more objective" and more "clear-cut"; "one knows at least where they stand"), RL has apparently more appeal to people with an intellectual background who are more sophisticated politically than the great majority of the Soviet population. An occasional RL commentary may be more thought-provoking than a comparable product of the Voice of America. But, so far as the listener's interpretation of RL's "general political line" is concerned, one remark at least is characteristic. A young defector, formerly with the Soviet occupation forces who escaped to the West early in 1957 said: "Frankly, God only knows where they stand. The nearest thing I can figure out is that they are somewhere between Tito and Gomulka."

Any evaluation of such an intangible operation as radio-propaganda is necessarily subjective. There are many things done by RL which are to its credit. Its news program has been reasonably well balanced. Reporting of special events which are of interest to the Soviet audience has been on a professional level. Its coverage of events in the satellite countries has been excellent. But the political commentary, which is the core of radio-propaganda, has been outstandingly weak. In most cases it is dull, evasive, flat, and uninspiring. It sounds like a lecture, or worse still, like an article in a second-rate publication. This is definitely the result of political confusion on the policy level. On the other hand, the commentary on non-political topics, arts, literature, and culture in general, has been of a high standard.

This lack of clarity in political matters is an obvious shortcoming. It was clearly demonstrated during the Hungarian crisis in November, 1956, when RL didn't know what to say. Actually, some foolish things were said. For example, appeals were made to the Soviet soldiers not to shoot the Hungarians because they also were building socialism; regrets were expressed because "our" brave soldiers murdered Hungarian women and children; appeals were made to the members of the Com-

munist Party and to the "politrabotniki" of the Army to stop the mass slaughter of the population.

Radio Liberation today is the major Western radio broadcasting effort to the Soviet Union and one which has enough leeway in its policy to be effective in its operation. Increasing tensions in the East-West relations are adding to the responsibility of RL and its supervisors. With its funds, its personnel, and its technical resources it is undoubtedly capable of turning out a better performance than is now accomplished. It isn't easy to recommend improvements, for any substantial reform would inevitably run into the inflexibility of a bureaucratic body already five years old. But if one is to put efficiency above other considerations the following changes seem necessary:

1. The claim that RL represents the émigrés from the Soviet Union should be dropped altogether. The radio station should be reorganized into an anonymous "Voice of Freedom," speaking honestly and straightforwardly to anyone who cares to listen. All the "angling" of facts for purposes of short-range expediency should be abandoned. RL should concentrate first of all, on winning the confidence of its audience. If these conditions are met, it will not be necessary even to change the name of the radio station or to reorganize its "nationality" set-up.

2. The notion that the purpose of radio broadcasting of this kind is to "woo" anybody should be abandoned. If a radio's integrity is preserved and if it achieves sufficient respect for honesty and fairness, the bitterness or irritation of some listeners will not matter as long as the broadcasts are interesting, informative, and sound.

3. The technique of script-writing and production could be improved, keeping in mind that to be effective the spoken word differs considerably from the written one.

4. The striving for political conformity which unfavorably affects the whole tone of RL should be abandoned. Instead, signed commentaries with enough policy leeway should be introduced. Debate, as another form of radio technique, should be employed, with speakers honestly disagreeing with each other. In such debates (which may also take the form of two consecutive commentaries with rebuttals) the participants

would be able to discuss freely the now suppressed issues, i.e. "Russia—Great and Indivisible" *vs.* "A free federation of peoples of Russia," or "socialism" *vs.* "private enterprise." It would not matter whether or not the panel members finally agreed with each other, but it would give the listeners something to think about. It would also make it possible for the real émigré voice to be heard in the U.S.S.R.

These reforms would mean a shift of the center of gravity from the administrative and advisory level, to actual production on the "language desk" level; they would increase the need for more original commentators and would call for even better basic services: research, monitoring, and up-to-date information on developments inside the Soviet Union. The editors' functions would thus become more technical in nature.

If some of the changes suggested above are carried out, RL could become what it should be—the voice of knowledge and freedom, talking with authority to the captive peoples of the Soviet Union.

Vladimir Mayakovsky

By HELEN MUCHNIC

IN an obituary on Alexander Blok, Mayakovsky recalled a meeting he had had with him during the first days of the Revolution:

"I passed by the thin, bent figure of a soldier warming himself by a bonfire Somebody called me. It was Blok . . .

I asked him: 'Do you like it?' — 'It's very good (*Khorosho*),' said Blok, and then added: 'They've burnt my library in the country.'

Well, this 'good' and 'they burned the library' were two feelings about the revolution interwoven in his poem 'The Twelve.' Some read it as a satire on the revolution, others as a glorification of it."

This comment on Blok is characteristic of Mayakovsky. A man who bemoaned the loss of his library could not, in his eyes, be wholly on the side of the revolution. To Mayakovsky he seemed pathetic, and when some years later he took Blok's *khorosho* as the title of a long poem, he did so ironically, in pointed contrast to his own unequivocal endorsement of "1918." Nothing, not even the death of an honored poet, would serve him as reason for unmerited praise. He was honest to the point of brutality. And for Blok's poetry, although he was artist enough to sense its merit, he denounced the school it represented. Symbolism, he said, had had its day; and he sought to demonstrate, in an essay called "How Verses are Made," that his own poetry was better, because it was closer to the spirit of the revolution. Whatever one might think of his estimate, one is bound to accept the fact, for if "The Twelve" is *the* poem of the Revolution, as it has been called, Mayakovsky is its poet. "The Twelve" was, after all, a feat of translation, in which events

foreign to the poet's self were rendered in the language of his private music and the imagery of his private dreams. But Mayakovsky did not need to translate. The language, tone, and purpose of the revolution were his own: the language of the street, the tone of exaltation, the purpose of remaking man and man's society. Unlike Blok, he had not had to overcome distaste for public affairs; he had been immersed in them from the beginning. And he had no patience with half measures, with shades of meaning and reflectiveness. He saw life simply, and believed erroneously that he saw it whole. Everything about him was large, loud, and spectacular. Everything was theatre, everything seemed public. He was the voice and the image of Revolutionary Romanticism, and seldom does an age find its embodiment so completely.

Yet, on the morning of April 14, 1930, he shot himself. The message that he left, addressed "To Everybody," read in part:

"Blame no one for my death, and please don't gossip.

The deceased disliked that awfully.

Mama, sisters and comrades—forgive me—it's not the right way. (I don't recommend it to others)—but I have no way out.

Lila—love me . . .

The verses I began please give the Briks; they will understand."

The verses were:

"It is past one

and you must be in bed.

The Milky Way,

a silver Oka,

lies upon the night.

I am in no haste,

and with a wire's flash

There is no need

to wake and trouble you.

As they say,

the incident is closed,

The love-boat

has crashed upon day-to-day life.

With you
 we have settled accounts
 and need not rehearse
Mutual sorrows,
 offenses,
 and hurts.

So long,"

Vladimir Mayakovsky

Why did he kill himself? There had, of course, been disappointments. "Like Pushkin before his wedding," writes Shklovsky, "Mayakovsky sought ordinary ways to happiness: made the acquaintance of young dramatists, watched how they lived," tried to find friends in RAPP, hoped for a woman's love. He had not found the happiness he sought: the young dramatists talked another language, the women he loved did not love him, he had enemies whose criticism amounted to persecution, and he was ill. It is not difficult, in short, to reckon up the circumstances and occasions, the shoals on which his life had crashed, but they are not the current which had driven it. Certainly it is absurd to think, as some have done, that he "died for love" in the sentimentally romantic sense. The "love-boat" was he himself, not a love affair. "Men are boats," he had written in his poem on Lenin, using a metaphor inspired perhaps by *Le Bateau Ivre*: he himself was a vessel of earthy and human love, and the current of his complex nature had carried the boat to its logical doom. The "real reason," of course, can never be fully known. But one cannot help noting the obsession with suicide that recurs persistently in his work. He was lured by the idea, and his eloquent denunciations of it may be due to the power of its attraction for him. This is what prompted Pasternak to speak of "that pedantry with which the will sometimes follows a road known to be inevitable."

Roman Jakobson, in tracing this suicidal obsession, has pointed out that a painful sense of the difference between the *I* and the *non-I* can be detected throughout his work. And indeed much of his poetry, as well as the conscious effort of his entire life, can be seen as an attempt to get the better of this experi-

ence of estrangement. At the end he must have realized that his loneliness was irremediable, and he died, as he lived, with a grim joke about himself and a word of explanation that explained nothing. There is no more tragic poet than he in Russian literature, and it will not do to hold society, nor even individuals, responsible for his tragedy; it was not by his world, but by himself that he felt oppressed, and it is difficult to imagine any external circumstances that would have brought him happiness. He was endowed with a violence of passion that can be neither satisfied nor subdued, that both seeks for sympathy and rejects it, that sees the world as too small for it, and strives perpetually to transcend the limitations by which it feels itself hemmed in. He felt himself enormous and unnecessary, and turning self-pity to defiance, forestalled sympathy by mocking both himself and others. He craved the dominance of martyrdom, and forced his mind to submit to the dictates of a scheme that claimed all his loyalty. "What would you do," he once asked Aseyev, "if the state decreed that all poetry must be written in iambs?" "I simply couldn't," said Aseyev. "Well," retorted Mayakovsky, "I would write in iambs."

Even his earliest poems, impudent and boastful, express desolation. "I go and solitary weep that crossroads crucify policemen" may look like surrealist fun, but in the context, where the poet's "trampled soul" is a pavement on which "the soles of madmen stamp the prints of rude, crude words" and "the crooked necks" of city towers "have grown cold" in a "cloud's noose," it becomes an image of helplessness. Cities hang, their guardians crucified, the poet's soul is in shreds, "the rags of a torn cloud in a burnt out sky," caught "on the rusty cross of a belfry." In a later poem, called "Cheap Sale," he will trade, he says, all that his soul rules over—and its riches are immeasurable—his immortality itself, and all the splendor in which eternity will clothe him, for one kind, human word. And elsewhere he calls himself an ostrich trying to hide its head in the feathers of stanzas, rhymes, and meters. There is a terrible, naked honesty in verses such as this; if they seem fantastic, it is that suffering has twisted reality into images of horror.

Of all Russian writers, Gogol was the favorite of his youth. He must have sensed in him his own variety of loneliness, the kind that turned what was not himself into the monstrous, the cruel, and the alien. Like Gogol, he was a humorist, but it can be as truthfully said of him as of Gogol that those who think him funny do not know how to read him. Gogol's laughter, as he himself explained, was the product of despair; he escaped from depression into an imaginary world of absurdity, but he never proclaimed his misery so openly as Mayakovsky, for he had accepted his alienation to this extent at least, that he had no desire to exhibit it. Mayakovsky, on the other hand, instead of fleeing to a never-never land, caricatured his own experience. He remained the central figure of his tragic work, instead of obliterating himself in fantastic tales as Gogol had done. For since he had never fully accepted the difference between the *I* and the *non-I*, he wanted to explain himself, and to unite himself to the world of men and things. There is, of course, this all-important difference between them, that whereas at the heart of Gogol's unhappiness lay a sense of loss and inadequacy, Mayakovsky's self-pity was based on a feeling of power, of an insufficiently appreciated grandeur. His tragedy had in it an element of paradox; it was the inarticulateness of the outspoken, the tragedy of those who seek to relieve pain by trying to explain it, although they know that pain is incommunicable and that when it is past cure, no one can be of help. A cry of pain is without purpose; and much of Mayakovsky's best work is in essence such a cry, disguised though it is as rational protest.

He was not clear about himself; and was a mixture of honesty and falsehood, of imperious wilfulness and dependence, of freedom and enslavement. Yet, consciously, he was nothing if not honest. His denunciations of society, of art, of morals and ideas were rooted in a loathing of pretense. It was honesty that made him blunt: the world was crude and ugly, his own experience was bitter; and he despised artists who insisted on sweetness and hated all men who loved comfort of body and ease of mind. There was much in him of the nineteenth century Russian nihilist, of Turgenev's Bazarov. But he was not so independent as they. He needed people not only for ap-

proval but for self-realization, and belonged to the type of rebel whom Albert Camus had called the Dandy, the man who does not know that he exists unless others can serve him as mirrors, who "acts his life, because he is incapable of living," for whom "to be alone is equivalent to being nothing," and who is always obliged to astonish others by negating their values, for he can define himself only by means of opposition. A desperate relationship is set up between the Dandy and his public. He demands approval and rejects it at one and the same time; he pleads and he abuses; he declares his love of men but holds them at arm's length. If he is a Rimbaud, his solitude becomes a habit, his scorn of men a principle of integration and a way of life. He has needed an audience up to a point only; he can, when he wishes, step off the boards and lead another kind of life. In a gesture of supreme mockery, he becomes what he despises. But Mayakovsky was always on stage, unable to retire; and all who knew him seem to have been struck by something profoundly discordant between the man himself and his appearance in public: the yellow blouse and the gesture of bravado concealed something they did not understand; the jester's role hinted at tragedy but deterred one from taking the tragic mask seriously.

Boris Pasternak has remarked that not content with taking one role, Mayakovsky acted the whole of life and with such careless disdain that his performance was terrifying, and Roman Jakobson has called his poetry "a scenario according to which he acted out the film of his life." The episodes of this scenario are well defined: childhood in Georgia and the revolution of 1905; Moscow with Party work and jail; the beginning of poetry; the "Golgotha" of the Futurist tour; first love; World War; Lila Brik; Revolution; NEP; trips abroad; the death of Lenin; lecture tours, illness, suicide. But both scenario and life were built on a process of mystification, that "playing with reality" which Boris Eichenbaum has shown to be the essence of Gogol's work. When Mayakovsky pictured himself as Man or Poet, as the martyred savior of humanity, or as the sun's comrade, he was indulging in a kind of solemn, baffling joke on the order of his other grotesques: the gruesome images of the

bleeding world in "War and the Universe," the huge fantasy of warring objects and the duel of giants in "150,000,000," the pictorial caricature of history and religion in *Mystery-Bouffe*. All are exaggerations intended to teach a lesson. As pictures they are unambiguous; all is black and white, there are no complexities, there is no shading. But they are jokes. And the theatrical pose was a similarly jesting riddle: on the one hand, a dramatic caricature that told others what they were to think of him, and on the other, a mask that saved him from the necessity of introspection and fooled him into believing that he knew himself. Whatever the motive—pride, vanity, or despair—this necessity to conceal lay at the heart of his work, although it appeared in the semblance of self-exposure.

Negation was the principle of Mayakovsky's life; and parody, which is a form of negation, was something more with him than a favorite trick of art. It was an ingrained habit of thought. His image of himself as a tragic hero was really a parody of the traditional concept of tragedy. From his point of view neither *hubris* nor *hamartia* were involved in his situation. Cruelly created to be man by a non-beneficent and non-existent god, he represented the human condition, the flaw of which was due to God, not him; nor could he sin through pride, since no moral sanction was higher than man's, and the deadliest sin, therefore, was not pride but an absence of it, not a challenge of divinity but the relinquishment of effort and ambition to challenge. In his tragic role he was defiant and self-sufficient. He passed judgement on himself, annihilated death, and talked to posterity. But he parodied even his own idea of tragedy when, attempting to achieve something like comic catharsis, he burlesqued his suffering and presented himself as a kind of *miles gloriosus* simulating absurdly the attributes of gods or nature. He did not manage to obtain what he desired; his performance was gravely earnest, even at its most preposterous; if he "stepped on the throat of his own song" he could not stamp it out, and his ultimate parody of artistic revelation lies in the doubt with which he leaves us as to how much of his clowning he intended to be taken seriously.

Ridicule absolved him of cosmic terror, and his anthropomorphism took rise in the opposite feeling from that which is usually presumed to motivate it. Usually, it would seem, the darker, the less explicable, the more awful an aspect of nature, the more does man seek to humanize it, wishing to diminish his fear of the incomprehensible by seeing it as human. But Mayakovsky's anthropomorphism is either a kind of camaraderie in which man fraternizes with nature, animals, and things, or a ghoulish force that turns what is perfectly familiar into something ominous and sinister. In his use of the pathetic fallacy, it is not nature that responds to man's experience, but man who sympathizes with nature—since in his view of life man is all-encompassing, and nature is part of him, not he of nature. When he wishes to present whatever seems to transcend man's limitations,—greater powers, greater achievements than theirs,—he neither elevates the human being to the rank of deity nor invests him with supernatural qualities but, in a way that parodies heroic myth, extends men's capacities within the realm of nature and confers earthy status on the superhuman: the stars and planets are his brothers, the universe is an animal, the soul wears a dressing gown, Christ is not God but the Most Ordinary Man; but the future is a place into which man can fly as easily as he can cross the ocean or divert the course of a river; and the completely human Lenin is in himself an era.

And yet, although negation was the heart of Mayakovsky's thought, he was not a Satanist of the romantic school who loved denial for its own sake. He loathed assent and had an imperative need to assert himself through contradiction, but his negation was not absolute, not like Rimbaud's, for instance. It was provoked by a respect for justice, and was aimed not so much at a transvaluation of values as at a redefinition of men's attitudes. He censured and blasphemed in the name of right, truth, and independence. Like Rimbaud, he wished to turn habitual concepts upside down, to shock men out of complacency, the stance of opposition was in itself important to him, and he delighted in blasphemy. But the blasphemy of *Une Saison en Enfer* has a suave elegance that Mayakovsky's lacks, for it is the witty statement of a personal experience, of one man's

conclusions about human history and human ideals, whereas the parody of Christ and of the Beatitudes in *Mystery-Bouffe*, for example, or the conclusion of "A Cloud in Trousers," or the sketch of heaven in "About What—About This" are didactic. They are purposefully grotesque, being tools in an ideological battle, not private visions. Mayakovsky and Rimbaud were kindred spirits, but in their most intimate experience they were each other's opposites. Rimbaud thought himself endowed with superhuman qualities which, being man, he was doomed to lose; from his idealistic heights he must come down to earth. Mayakovsky, on the other hand, who held that there was nothing greater than to be simply man, felt in himself angelic qualities and powers that transcended the earth. Rimbaud's negation was absolute, because it came of an embittered sense of loss; Mayakovsky's was a tentative first step on his way to the grand affirmation of a universal Utopia.

His art was public through and through: in purpose, form, even in process of composition. He seldom composed, pencil in hand, but was always at work. Once his sister ran into him on the street; he waved her off: "Don't interrupt me. I am writing." And once when some one asked him how he worked: "It's this way," he said, "I walk along. And all of a sudden a big desk appears in the air before me. I sit down at it, and start writing." Korney Chukovsky, whom he visited in Kuokkala when he was composing "A Cloud in Trousers," has described him at work: "He would sometimes stop, light a cigarette, sink in thought. Sometimes he'd gallop off as if storm driven, leaping from stone to stone; but most often he'd walk along like a lunatic, with an uneven stride, spreading wide his enormous legs . . . and never for a moment stopped talking to himself in a concentrated, quiet conversation." Once a poor peasant was terrified into frantic flight, when he saw this creature marching toward him over the dunes.

Not only did Mayakovsky write for the street, he wrote in the street; and his verse swings to the rhythm of his stride and bears the accent of his heavy step and the casualness of informal meetings. Loud, determined, staccato, beating with the pulse of the day, there is no intimacy in it, nothing of that "inner life"

that Mayakovsky seems to have denied himself for the sake of an audience of which he was always aware. Powerful and defiant, he believed himself free, but never would be, nor could he have said, like Beethoven about his quartets, that he was writing for himself. If he dreamed, he paid no attention to his dreams. Even his surrealist effects were consciously contrived; nothing welled up unasked from the unconscious,—and his visions of the future give the impression of having come not of insight, but of fantastic desire. When from painting the real he passed to the imaginary, he refused to note the transition or admit the irrationality of his visions. Just as he himself had become indistinguishable from the part he had undertaken to play, so hyperbole, which he had originally adopted as an artistic device, came to stand in his mind for reality. His will was stronger than his judgment. His thought was as rhetorical as his style; his poetry, his life, and his reasoning were passionate and narrow.

An immoderate and violent man, he had no capacity for analysis or detachment; he did not criticize, he damned; he did not love, but worshipped; he could hate and despise, but not dislike. He was intransigent in his opinions, and as uncompromising in his relations with himself as with others. He made his reason fight unhappiness, and his public voice shout down the private one. If he confused the two, mistaking ventriloquism for his own speech and, at the last, was stifled by the heroic puppet that masked the man in him, he did not know it. His work was a process of wilfull exclusion, and it is strong by reason of its passion, not its wisdom. Sometimes it seems the poetry of a nihilist Beethoven, without Beethoven's melody or lightness, but with his power to record the grandeur of rebellious suffering. And sometimes it reminds one of those primitive sculptures, massive and rough, that seem to express the anguish of a child, helplessly possessed by an overwhelming emotion. His self-analyses indicate a struggle between a sense of his own greatness and his desire to be at one with the masses of men. But he has nothing of that large, generous ease, that indiscriminating joy of life which Whitman makes a virtue and the basis of his love of men.

Mayakovsky is all tension, striving, willing. He is united with humanity not in feeling, but on principle. The principle is the magnet of his vigorous emotions, and it is therefore passionately argued. A megalomaniac image is made to express the nature of humanity. It was as if a Russian Rimbaud had tried to make himself the Whitman of the proletarian revolution.

It is an indication of Mayakovsky's complex and paradoxical nature that he should have combined the characteristics of two such opposite souls as Walt Whitman and Rimbaud. He knew neither English nor French, but Burluk introduced him to Rimbaud and Chukovsky to Whitman whom he was translating; and such was Mayakovsky's feeling for language that he could grasp the texture of even a foreign poet's speech. He offered Chukovsky, for example, valuable suggestions for his Whitman. His own poetry often reminds one of Whitman's. Like his, it is made to be spoken and has a similarly loose, oratorical structure, the long line, the marked, emphatic beat, the calculated crudeness, and there are passages in it which unmistakably echo Whitman. But Whitman's long rhythms are Biblical, Mayakovsky's re-create the cadence of his own steps. Whitman's praise of man, his exultation in the body, his love of humankind must certainly have appealed to Mayakovsky. Yet, in "150,000,000" he pictures him derisively as "rocking a cradle in imperceptible rhythm" and bearing the highest title which Americans bestow on a poet, "honored smoother of ladies' wrinkles." He was too much of a rebel to tolerate Whitman's open-hearted geniality. Never could he have been a "Good Gray Poet"; and even if like Whitman he loved things and men in the abstract, his feeling for them was not exactly comradely; his pride in them and in himself was too involved in suffering to be joyous; the violence of his love resembled hatred. In his rebelliousness he was closer to Rimbaud.

But his was a primal, Promethean revolt that took place in the void and was itself a kind of parody. There was no Zeus for him to defy, and, unlike Rimbaud, he had never believed in the God whom he addressed. His blasphemy was, in effect, a denunciation of men's folly, and a cry of resentment for his own suffering. He addressed himself to a nothingness, a cosmic in-

justice that had once been given a name and which men worshipped as good, and pitied them for adoring this embodiment of tyranny. He wanted to cure them of error, and to lead them out of torment; and so he courted them in the dual capacity of martyr and jester: if they wished, he would dance for their amusement, or, like Gorky's Danko, would give them his heart as a banner. It was as if, oppressed by his immensity, he could be at ease only on the stage, where he tried to make himself intelligible by pretending to be grotesque. There he had postured, a lonely giant, unconscious of the irony that made the role he played more tragic than he realized. He addressed himself to large crowds, talked to the masses in their own language, all Russia knew him. Yet these people were not his real audience. The real one he invented, imaginatively transforming the men before him into a concept of Humanity. And even as he served the needs of the moment among actual people in a given place, he was shouting to the future through the void of his crowded auditoriums. He neither saw nor knew the men for whom he wished to sacrifice himself. It was as if through some metamorphosis Prometheus had become Narcissus; instead of bringing men fire, Mayakovsky was himself consumed, and what he saw before him was not, as he thought, the men he had endowed with their most precious possession, but his own flaming image.

He had made himself all will, and gloried in self-immolation; and there is a dreadful logic in his progress up to his final assertion of supreme self-mastery and freedom, when, having assembled his life work for all to see, he died at thirty-seven, at the same age as Pushkin, and also in a kind of duel. He had managed by means of enormous labor—it was labor he boasted of, not inspiration—to create a Socialist Art. He was proud of it, and like the god of the Deists, having done his work and seen that it was good, retreated from it, sure of its survival.

As artist, Mayakovsky was the opposite of the Shakespeare once described by Coleridge, as one who "first studied patiently, meditated deeply, understood minutely, till knowledge, become habitual and intuitive, wedded itself to his habitual feelings." Mayakovsky had respect for neither meditation nor patience.

Instead of study and minute understanding, he pounced on events and molded them in the roughly hewn formulas of reason-masked prejudice. Nevertheless, his loud rhetoric, inflated imagery, propagandist simplifications, his broken rhythms, and brutal words achieve aesthetic wholeness, because they contain in themselves their reason for being. There is grandeur in them, and the strength of immediacy, the sense, that is, of something lived, not borrowed from talk about life. They express the upheaval, wilfullness, and negation, which are the mark of his day; and neither the bold, bright way he used the language of the street, nor the raw agony of his impassioned love, nor his crude but pointed wit are likely to be soon forgotten.

His limitations are the limitations of the revolutionary temper, and more than a revolutionist Mayakovsky never claimed nor desired to be. When from rebel he passed to revolutionary, he changed from outlaw to architect, acquired, that is, a plan for action and a social purpose. But a revolutionary can have no truck with either sentiment or metaphysics. Mayakovsky could not have accepted that "anguish" and "absurdity" which Existentialists have announced to be man's "condition." The revolutionary deals briefly with such matters: he cuts the Gordian knot of man's predicament, and gives the rope to the hangman. He might discover that he cannot jump out of his heart, but he also knows that it is in his power to make the heart stop beating. This assumption of a defiant fortitude compels him to the greatest effort of which he is capable, and making a virtue of extreme positions, leads to fanaticism and martyrdom. There is hardly a better example of it than the achievement of Vladimir Mayakovsky and his real tragedy.

Reformers and Radicals in Pre-World War I America

By DIMITRI VON MOHRENSCHILDT

IN the past half century the political ideology of the American liberal intelligentsia seems to have described a complete circle—from reform to social revolution and back to reform again. The vigorous protest movement of the early twentieth century, provides, I think, an interesting background for two decades of Moscow-inspired radicalism.¹ It might be useful to re-examine this movement and to reassess its significance.

At the turn of the century the United States was indisputably the richest, and in many respects, the most advanced country in the world. There seemed no limit to the unprecedented industrial expansion of the thirty years following the Civil War. The big railway, oil, and steel empires were already consolidated, or in the process of consolidation. Foreigners who visited America agreed that the standard of living in this country was higher than elsewhere.

"The United States," wrote Andrew Carnegie in 1886 in his *Triumphant Democracy*, "has already reached the foremost place among nations, and is soon to out-distance all others in the race. In population, in wealth, in annual saving, and in public credit, in freedom from debt, in agriculture, and in manufacture, America already leads the civilized world." At the dawn of the century these words were still gospel to millions of Americans.

Yet, a small but rapidly increasing number of earnest American men and women of intellectual bent and journalistic ability, refused to share the prevalent optimism. They saw the country

¹This article serves as background for the author's previously published articles on American intelligentsia and the Bolshevik Revolution (*The Russian Review*, November, 1943; Winter, 1945; Spring, 1947) [Ed.].

reeking with corruption in politics and in business; Boss Tweed and the machinations of a Rockefeller, Armour, and Carnegie were still fresh in their memories. They took a special interest in recalling Jim Fisk's remark after some particularly shady deal: "Nothing is lost save honor," and Cornelius Vanderbilt's—"Do you think I can carry on business according to New York law?"

They were appalled by the conditions in the factories, by the ever-increasing slums of the big cities, by the treatment of the Negro in the deep South, and above all, by the growing power of the trusts which threatened, they thought, the well-being, the very existence, of the small business man, the shopkeeper, the worker.

In a century and a half the democracy of the United States had become, as Lincoln Steffens expressed, "an oligarchy of special interests." It was time for reform, and the two decades preceding World War I saw the most extensive movement of social protest this country had thus far known.

It was a complex movement, representing a variety of social and political opinion. Although the analyses of the evils of American society were largely the same, the methods of dealing with these evils and the solutions proposed were many and varied.

The earliest and most important trend was represented by a group of free-lance journalists, sociologists, novelists, poets, and philosophers who came to be known as "Muckrakers." It was President Theodore Roosevelt who picked the epithet out of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and gave it to those engaged in exposing corruption in politics and business.

The Muckrakers addressed themselves to the public at large and then published their exposures in popular magazines such as *McClure's*, *The American Magazine*, and *Colliers*. The movement was native, American, and had its precedent in such works as the anti-slavery novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), by Harriet Beecher Stowe, the socialist Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* (1888), and Henry Demarest Lloyd's first indictment of the Standard Oil Company, *Wealth Against Commonwealth* (1894).

"The cure for the evils of democracy, is more democracy" was the original motto of the Muckrakers, later modified by Lincoln Steffens to "the cure for political democracy is more economic democracy." A few of the Muckrakers became, in time, socialists of a reformist type, but the majority never questioned the status quo.

The literature that came out of the Muckrakers' movement was, in part, frankly sensational and "yellow," as, for example, the journalistic campaigns of William Randolph Hearst. But a great deal, if not most, of this literature of exposure was serious, "literary," and even scholarly. Such were, for example, Ida Tarbell's two-volume history of the Standard Oil Company (1904) which started a series of trust-busting campaigns; Lincoln Steffens' *The Shame of the Cities* (1904), a masterly series of articles in *McClure's* exposing municipal corruption; Ray Stannard Baker's *Following the Color Line* (1908), a brilliant exposé of lynchings, murders, and riots in the deep South; Frank Norris' novel *The Octopus* (1901), depicting the oppression of farmers and workers by the railroad magnet Collis P. Huntington, and *The Pit* (1903), portraying disastrous speculations in wheat at the Chicago Stock Exchange; Upton Sinclair's novel *The Jungle* (1906), a vivid picture of the conditions prevalent in the meat-packing industry in Chicago and the literary sensation of the time.

In addition, there appeared, during the first decade of the century, many novels, essays, treatises, and even poems, dealing with labor conditions, Jewish immigration, penal reform, and the slums.

No less active than the Muckrakers in the quest for a fuller and more representative democracy were the many varieties of pre-war liberals and progressives. Although less interested, perhaps, in exposing corruption, fundamentally they were engaged in the same quest—control over large industries and financial interests, elimination of waste and corruption, more equitable distribution of wealth, and further extension of rights for labor to unionize.

Closely allied, and in some respects indistinguishable from the Muckrakers and liberal reformers, were the pre-war social-

ists. Drawing their inspiration chiefly from the Utopian socialists and English Fabians, as well as Walt Whitman and Edward Carpenter, their favorite remedy was guild socialism—representation by industrial groups or guilds. Following the spirit of the time, the chief targets of the socialists' attack were big business and corrupt government.

It was, on the whole, a mild, humanitarian socialism, more interested in educational activity than in revolutionary change. Most of its leaders were well-known intellectuals including such figures as the novelists Jack London and Upton Sinclair; Charles Edward Russell, poet, critic, and editor of *The World*; William English Walling, journalist, social worker, and authority on Russian affairs;² Charles A. Beard, historian; Harry F. Ward, theologian; Walter Lippman, the future pundit of the *Herald Tribune*; and an Englishman, John Spargo. The latter was a Fabian Socialist who came to this country at the age of twenty-six and assumed for a time a prominent position in the United States socialist party founded by Eugene Debs.³

Among the pre-war socialists, Jack London occupied a unique position. A proletarian, fatherless and poor, he had received his early education along the windswept wharves of San Francisco, in the bare kitchens of Coxey's Army, and among the adventurers of the Klondike gold rush. Through dogged persistence he managed to accumulate wealth and achieve fame as a writer. He bought a large ranch in California, built a palatial house there and hired an army of servants to take care of him. One of the earliest exponents of Marx in this country, London became contemptuous of reform and what he called "soft socialism." He explained his position in an interview which he gave

²Walling's magazine articles on Russia and his book *Russia's Message*, 1908, were among the most popular writings on Russia in pre-war America. Arthur Bullard and Ernest Poole were also among pre-war Russian experts. All three, after the Bolshevik Revolution, became sharply critical of the Bolshevik theory and practice.

³During World War I, Spargo took a strong pro-war stand and, with other patriotic socialists, was expelled from the party. In later years he, too, became sharply critical of the Bolshevik brand of socialism. In the late twenties he apparently lost all faith in socialism and re-emerged as a defender of capitalism and a partisan of Herbert Hoover.

shortly before the war to a small Pacific Coast socialist publication, as reported by Joan London, in the biography of her father:

I became a socialist . . . when I was seventeen years old. I am still a socialist, but not of the refined, quietistic school of socialism . . . I still believe that socialists should strive to eliminate the capitalist class and wipe away the private ownership of mines, mills, factories, railroads and other social needs. I believe that any means will justify the end. I believe in any method to bring about the socialist commonwealth. "You think that a peaceful and legal change is impossible?" History shows that no master class is ever willing to let go without a quarrel. The capitalists run the governments, armies and the militia. Don't you think the capitalists will use these institutions to keep themselves in power? I do.

London's last years reflected his profound disillusionment. He began to drink heavily and grew more and more pessimistic and cynical. In 1916 he took a strongly pro-Ally stand, accused his colleagues of cowardice and resigned from the socialist party.

London died five months before the United States entered World War I and ten months before the Bolshevik coup d'état. Unpredictable and contradictory, it is impossible to say what his reactions would have been to the Bolshevik seizure of power in 1917.⁴

Side by side with socialism there grew another, stronger and more violent brand of social protest—anarchism. There were different varieties of it: Benjamin Tucker and Johann Most, original American exponents of the movement known as "philosophical anarchists"; the followers of "Big Bill" Haywood, head of the IWW,⁵ representing the anarcho-syndicalist, or trade union trend; and the followers of the international anarchist movement represented by Emma Goldman and Alexander Berk-

⁴The entry of the United States in World War I in April, 1917 split the ranks of the socialists. While the party declared itself against the "imperialist war," many leading socialists became ardent patriots, supported the government and resigned from the party. The Bolshevik Revolution gave the mild, reformist pre-war socialism the final blow from which it never fully recovered.

⁵In the early twenties Haywood jumped bail and fled to Soviet Russia where he spent the last seven years of his life. Half of his ashes were buried with the usual pomp in Red Square in Moscow, the other half, in compliance with his wishes, were sent to his native Chicago.

man. The anarchists attacked the capitalist system and were openly against state power in any form, whether bourgeois-democratic or Marxian. Inspired by Bakunin and Prince Kropotkin, they hoped to achieve a new social order through the working men, without the intermediacy of the state, as was the case with the socialists. Although, theoretically, the anarchists were opposed to violence, in practice they frequently resorted to it.

Emma Goldman was undoubtedly the best-known and most admired of any intellectual radical in America before World War I. She and her life-long companion, Alexander Berkman came from Russia as poor immigrant Jews and were first impelled to action by the execution of the Chicago anarchists in 1887. Berkman, a brooding, mystical man made the daring attempt on the life of Henry Clay Frick, the oil magnate, and as the result of this and other violent activity spent eighteen and a half of his thirty-three years in the United States in prison. Both he and Emma Goldman were deported to Soviet Russia in 1919 on the famous transport *Buford*, known as the *Soviet Ark*. Both soon fell out with the Soviet leaders and spent the rest of their lives denouncing Bolshevism.⁶

One center of anarchism in the United States was the Ferrar School at 63 West 107th Street in New York. Founded in 1910 as "a laboratory in which to test new social theories" many prominent writers, poets, and artists were associated with it in the course of the next decade. It was there that Edwin Markham lectured on poetry, Clarence Darrow on Voltaire, Berkman and Goldman on American and Russian drama, Lincoln Steffens and Hutchins Hapgood on government and labor problems, and Robert Henri and George Bellows conducted classes in art. But by far the most popular center of anarchist activity was Union Square in New York. For twenty-five years it was a favorite place for mass meetings where riots and strikes were incited and discontent was sown among the unemployed. It was usual-

⁶Goldman and Berkman continued, however, to preach socialist revolution à la Bakunin to the end of their lives. Berkman, in 1936, shot himself in Nice, France, and Emma Goldman died in obscurity in Toronto, Canada, four years later.

ly there that the blond, blue-eyed Emma Goldman held forth, shouting wildly to her followers, calling upon them to "organize and go to the churches, to the hotels, the restaurants and the bake shops and take what was rightfully theirs." For did not Cardinal Manning himself say that "necessity knows no law and the starving man has a natural right to a share of his neighbor's bread?" Sometimes the listeners followed the invitation, as many headlines attest, and endless riots ensued.

A great deal of noise and excitement was aroused by the anarchists' riots, strikes, and the trials of their leaders, but it is probably true, as Louis Filler observed, that anarchism in the United States "did not dictate any of the larger social relationships of the time. So far as deeper currents were concerned, it tended to be rather a bogey man to conservatives than an effective force."

By and large, all the varieties of pre-war political opinion, from the Rooseveltian liberals to the anarchists, tended to merge. It was an optimistic, amiable movement, libertarian and largely rooted in American soil. By the end of the first decade of the century, actually a good deal of graft and corruption had been exposed and some legislative reform had been promulgated. Herbert Croly, in his book *The Promise of American Life* (1909), gave perhaps the fullest and the most effective exposition of this early phase of the protest movement. Passed almost unnoticed at the time, this little book, thirty years later, was widely hailed by many intellectuals, (by then disillusioned in Marx and Lenin) as the greatest political treatise of pre-war America.

The second phase of the movement began on a sharper, more critical note. The new generation, which became articulate about 1911, was much more radically inclined and had little faith in political reformism. It idealized the working class, despised the middle-class traditions, and thought that it was the duty and privilege of the intellectual to "serve" the cause of the proletariat. The new radicals were mostly poets, artists, critics, and a miscellany of literary highbrows. The center of

their activity was Greenwich Village and their organ of expression, *The Masses*.⁷

Founded in 1911 by Thomas Seltzer, *The Masses* was under the editorship of Max Eastman who was then teaching philosophy at Columbia. He succeeded in assembling an interesting literary board. Some of the better-known members included John Reed, "the most ardent revolutionary and most consistent poet"; Floyd Dell, a genial journalist from Chicago and an exponent of psychoanalysis and revolution; and Louis Untermeyer, critic and successful businessman. There was a gifted group of art editors, Art Young, George Bellows, Boardman Robinson, and Robert Minor, who deserved, perhaps, the greatest credit for their caricatures and illustrations.

This representative cross-section of radical Bohemia met weekly either in the Village headquarters of the magazine or in the famous salon of Mabel Dodge Luhan at 23 Fifth Avenue—one of the favorite social centers of pre-war radical intelligentsia.

The spirit and aims of *The Masses* were expressed by the editors in the original issue of the publication: "A revolutionary, not a reform magazine . . . a magazine with a sense of humor and no respect for the respectful; frank; arrogant; impertinent; searching for the true causes; a magazine directed against rigidity and dogma wherever it is found; printing what is too naked or true for a money-making press; a magazine whose final policy is to do as it pleases and conciliate nobody, not even its readers—a free magazine." This picturesque outburst is perhaps especially significant because of its emphasis on total freedom—in art, literature, sex, and even in politics.

Although ostensibly proletarian and Marxian, *The Masses* had no rigid philosophy or credo. It successfully combined liberals, anarchists, Marxists, in fact every type of intellectual interested in voicing protest against some phase of American life. The editors championed, as Louis Untermeyer observed in his autobiography, "women's suffrage, free thought, (and,

⁷After the entry of the United States into World War I, *The Masses* was suppressed. In reality, however, it merely changed names and became *The Liberator*. Henceforth the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia became the magazine's guiding star and chief inspiration.

by implication, free love), socialism, birth control, and the art of beautiful letters." It attacked the capitalist press, prevalent commercialism, and bad taste in general. According to Bernard Smith, the Marxian critic, "it was a rallying center for all who were enemies of bourgeois respectability, whether in politics or in art . . . as much an organ of Bohemia as of socialism."

Besides a good deal of poetry, literary sketches and essays on Freud and Jung, and gay nude women on its covers, *The Masses* also contained "revolutionary matter," chiefly in the form of anti-capitalist cartoons and editorials by Eastman, Reed, and Dell. But none of the editors were, at the time, very class-conscious or dedicated revolutionary conspirators. Rather, they played at revolution and were enjoying it, as illustrated by a popular jingle often repeated at the time:

"They draw nude women for the masses,
Thick, ungainly, ugly lasses.
How does that help the
Working Classes?"

Although *The Masses* was an organ of intellectual Bohemia and was certainly not read by the proletariat, it played, I think, an important role not only as a meeting ground for the discontented intellectuals of the time, but also in shaping, to some extent, the character of American literature. For it was on the pages of this "revolutionary" magazine that appeared the early work of Eugene O'Neil, Carl Sandburg, Edgar Lee Masters, Ernest Hemingway, Edmund Wilson, Sherwood Anderson, and John Dos Passos.

By 1917 the intellectual atmosphere of the metropolis tended more and more in the direction of social radicalism. In fact the words "intellectual" and "radical" became almost synonymous. "To write," said Padraic Colum, "in favor of that which the great interests of the world are against, is what I conceive to be the duty and privilege of the intellectual." And Lee Wilson Dodd, late in 1917 thus characterizes the prevalent atmosphere:

An American intellectual is any writer for publication, whether a citizen of the United States or alien resident thereof, who believes that our country is a financial oligarchy camouflaged as a democracy. To be worthy of the title he must, in addition, be a conscientious

objector—not only to war but to pretty much everything in the way of national obligation. He must sneer at any symptoms of awakening patriotism as atavistic outbreaks of brutish herd psychology. Moreover, it will make his possession of the title even more secure if he is a Revolutionary-Socialist; inalienable if he is a Proletarian Anarchist.⁸

This, then, is the note on which the pre-war protest movement comes to an end. Starting at the beginning of the century with a highly earnest and matter-of-fact exposure of specific ills of American society, the movement ends on a note of sweeping repudiation of the entire social system. It would appear that by 1917 a considerable section of American liberal intelligentsia came to the conclusion that poverty, graft, and privilege were too deeply rooted in the economic system of the country and that reforms were useless. It was the profit system itself that was an evil and, being incompatible with political democracy, had to be abolished.

In retrospect, it was a singularly tolerant movement, pragmatic, in many respects typically American. As yet there were no party lines, no one remedy, no one method of achieving social change. Marx, Bakunin, Henry George, Paine, and Jefferson somehow co-existed, each offering to some a possible cure for the evils of American society. The entry of the United States into the war disrupted the movement, and the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia gave it its death blow.

Historically, the intellectuals have always played a leading role in social reform and revolutionary movements. It was so in feudal eighteenth-century France, in Tsarist Russia, and early twentieth-century America. But the closest parallel, I think, can be drawn between the pre-war American and the pre-revolutionary Russian reform movements. Both were led by well-educated, high-minded individuals in their respective societies; both were equally detached from the masses which they repeatedly strove to reach; both were fighting special privileges: in America those of the business plutocracy, in Russia, those of the land-owners and government officialdom; both movements started as those of exposure of social evils and both ended by questioning the bases upon which the respective societies—the

⁸*The New Republic*, December 22, 1917.

American capitalist democracy and the Russian autocracy—were founded.

But here the analogy ends. The outcome of these movements were widely different. In Russia the century-old quest for liberal reform was wiped out by the Bolshevik Revolution. In America, although for almost a quarter of a century the Bolshevik revolutionary ideology and methods exercised a profound influence upon a large section of American intelligentsia, by mid-century these concepts were largely outgrown. Once again the American liberal intelligentsia began to identify itself with traditional American life and culture; once again "the American men of protest gave way to the men of affirmation."

Book Reviews

KOROL, ALEXANDER G. *Soviet Education for Science and Technology*. Cambridge, Mass., The Technology Press of MIT and John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 1957. 513 pp. \$8.50.

The Russian system of education is presently attracting wide interest in the United States and this book by Korol gives a very complete picture of the development of this system. The material presented in the volume was derived directly from research on Soviet education carried out at the Center for International Studies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. A number of MIT faculty members assisted in the evaluation of Soviet textbooks and other documentary material during this study.

The first four chapters of the book deal with secondary education in Russia. A complete analysis of the now well-established Ten-Year School (4-3-3) is given. The author states that after "educational chaos" produced by the early Soviet experimentation with the school system, a return to traditional practices was resorted to in the early 1930's. In 1936 the Central Committee of the Communist Party "... put an abrupt stop to the growing preoccupation of Soviet educators with practices based on child study—pedology—which were derived largely from American developments in the use of school-child psychology, psychometrics, intelligence and aptitude testing. The Central Committee of the Party condemned the entire con-

cept of pedology, stating that its application resulted in directing a large number of children to remedial classes or special schools . . ."

By 1937 the organization of the homogeneous system leading progressively to elementary (4-year), incomplete secondary (7-year) and secondary (10-year) education was completed. Strict discipline, standardized programs, centrally approved textbooks, promotional and final examinations and the pre-revolutionary system of grading were all restored. The standardized programs are applied uniformly to all pupils, with no elective courses, and the seven upper grades of the ten-year school are similar to the Russian Real schools of the pre-revolutionary period.

Great attention is given to the teaching of mathematics and science. Every pupil takes five years of algebra and geometry, two years of trigonometry, five years of physics, and four years of chemistry. The result is that every high school pupil in Russia spends more than 1/3 of his school time in mathematics and science. In contrast, the author states that in 1954 about 23 percent of the public high schools in the U.S. offered neither physics nor chemistry. Furthermore, only one out of five of our public high school students takes any physics and only 13 percent take trigonometry and solid geometry. In elementary mathematics, the Russian schools have returned to the use of the same textbooks as in the pre-revolutionary period. For example, the well-known books

by A. P. Kiselev are being used for geometry and algebra. In physics and chemistry, however, new textbooks have appeared and it seems that the requirements in this field have increased considerably as compared with pre-revolutionary times. "At the same time the program in foreign languages is reduced somewhat." As a general conclusion the author states that "all Soviet ten-year school graduates are exposed to and study topics in mathematics and science up to a level reached by very few American young men and women with high school education."

In Chapters 5 to 11 the author discusses Soviet higher education and describes the various types of schools. In mathematical and engineering training the physico-mathematical faculties of Russian universities and engineering institutes are the most important. The number of candidates wishing to enter these schools is always much larger than the number of vacancies and competitive examinations are used in selecting freshmen. The entrance examinations are usually in five subjects: Russian language and literature, mathematics, physics, chemistry and foreign language. (An MIT professor of mathematics remarks: "These examinations are definitely more difficult than any we have used for entrance. They are more like those we have used in scholarship . . . or prize competitions . . . now organized in various parts of the U.S.") These examinations make it unnecessary to have in the freshman year any "make-up" courses in mathematics or humanities, as is frequently necessary in the U.S. to compensate for an unsatisfactory program of study in high school.

The present university programs

in Russia are considerably enlarged as compared with those in the pre-revolutionary time and the four-year-plan has been replaced by a five-year program. This permits the students to do some independent scientific work during the last year. About 60 percent of those graduating in mathematics, physics and chemistry take teaching positions in secondary schools. It is interesting to note that in their curricula these future teachers devote only about 5 percent of their time to subjects in education (Pedagogy, Methods of Teaching Mathematics). In the Pedagogical Institutes, courses in education take about 13 percent of the instruction time of a future mathematics teacher.

Higher education in the various fields of engineering in Russia is given in Engineering Institutes and much information regarding the development of these schools is given in this book. Again it is pointed out that after the chaos of the revolutionary era the engineering schools gradually returned to their pre-revolutionary form of organization. The engineering profession has always been considered with high regard in Russia and the competitive entrance examinations in the leading engineering schools usually attract the best high school graduates. The engineering schools also have five-year programs and customarily each school is organized for a specific field of industry, so that there are separate schools for mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, transportation, etc. Since the entering pupils are well-prepared, the engineering schools are able to provide, during the first two years, a very substantial training in such fundamental subjects as mathematics, mechanics, physics, chemistry and descriptive geome-

try. During the third year, engineering subjects such as kinematics, dynamics of machines, design of machine parts, technical thermodynamics, hydraulics, theory of structures, etc., are given. At the same time, the student is given work in the laboratories and in engineering courses of a descriptive character. To these three years of basic engineering education, two years of specialized training are added. During this period the student's work consists principally of the carrying out of several projects under the supervision of specialists, and in accomplishing the Diploma Project. This latter project consists of the design of a machine, structure or installation, complete with drawings, cost computations, performance estimates and other data. (This type of student work, common in European engineering schools, is associated in the U.S. with professional employment after graduation, or on-the-job training.) From this it is clear that at graduation the Russian engineer has been given a better theoretical and practical preparation than can be given in an undergraduate program to an American student.

The book also gives some information about administrative officers in the schools, about the councils of professors and faculties. The "academic freedom" which the institutions of higher education possessed before the revolution is now suppressed. For example, the council of professors no longer elects the school administration. Instead, the rectors of the universities and directors of the engineering institutes are appointed by the central government. However, the council of professors participates in the election of new professors and the election, as before, is on the

basis of a national competition. In each particular case a special committee is appointed and the council makes its decision on the basis of the committee's comparative estimate of candidates participating in the competition. High prestige is attached to the title of professor and a professor's salary is considerable, so that the leading engineering schools can bring to their staffs the best talent in the country. For illustration, the table below gives typical salaries, as reported in the book, with the salary of unskilled labor being taken as unity. It is seen that Russian schools have a much better opportunity to bring highly qualified men to their teaching staffs than American schools have.

Category	USA	USSR
Laborer	1.0	1.0
Truck driver	1.3	2.3
School teacher	1.6	3.3
Railroad conductor	2.5	—
University professor	2.5	16.0

In the concluding chapter of the book the author discusses the influence of the Communist regime on the development of the Russian educational system. This influence has been disastrous in the field of humanities, but in teaching mathematics, natural sciences and engineering the pre-revolutionary traditions proved to be very strong, and education has gone back gradually to the pre-revolutionary condition. The upper classes in the ten-year schools are very similar today to the former Russian Real schools and the present engineering schools are approaching in their programs the pre-revolutionary engineering institutes with five-year programs.

S. P. TIMOSHENKO

Stanford University

Russian Thought and Politics. Edited by Hugh McLean, Martin E. Malia, and George Fischer. Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1957. 513 pp. \$7.50.

During his more than forty years in this country, as editor, author, lecturer, administrator, adviser, and teacher, Professor Michael Karpovich has given liberally of himself. Among the chief beneficiaries of his intellectual and spiritual generosity have been his graduate students at Harvard. Twenty-seven of them have now joined, upon the occasion of his retirement, to publish this book of essays in his honor.

As Philip Mosely, one of his early pupils, indicates in the book's introduction, Professor Karpovich has labored devotedly to build a bridge between his native and his adopted culture. Even during his first years in America, while he was still occupied with the affairs of the former Russian embassy, Michael Karpovich became known to American audiences as a lecturer who, although he had suffered deeply from events in Russia, strove nevertheless to explain them impartially, in the spirit of his pre-revolutionary training as an historian. And after 1927, when Harvard enabled him to resume his chosen profession, he quickly achieved fame as one of America's most perceptive interpreters of Russian thought and action. Meanwhile, on the other end of the bridge, he consistently aided Russian refugees to enrich their own culture and to understand and find a firm place in their new environment. Outstanding in this respect has been his editorship since 1941 of the *Novyi Zhurnal*.

The inspiring teaching of Professor Karpovich finds expression here in his pupils' handiwork. The high

standard set by Professor Mosely's sensitive and eloquent introduction is maintained, with only a few exceptions, throughout the volume.

The essays reflect Professor Karpovich's special interest in the final century-and-a-quarter of the Russian Empire. Only three of the topics antedate the nineteenth century, and they belong to the end of the eighteenth—Hans Rogger's delineation of the ideas of Fonvizin, Novikov, and others on the Russian national character, Richard Pipes' study of Karamzin's conception of the monarchy, and Roderick Thaler's discussion of Radishchev's views on Britain and America. At the other chronological extreme there is only one essay distinctly in the Soviet period—that by Herbert Dinerstein on the Sovietization of Uzbekistan up to 1939—although there are several that cluster around the year 1917, including Robert Daniels' evaluation of Russian and Marxist elements in Lenin's revolution, Robert Browder's reappraisal of Kerensky's early role, Stanley Page's account of Lenin from April to July of 1917, Oliver Radkey's analysis of the Socialist Revolutionaries' failure in the winter of 1917-18, and Donald Treadgold's re-examination of Wrangel's leadership in the last stage of the Civil War.

Although the essays are thus chronologically united, they exhibit diversity in their approaches to the multiple facets of history. Marc Raeff, for example, advances the hypothesis that nineteenth-century Russia did not possess a true bureaucracy, and that this lack accounts for the persistence of Russian autocracy. Joseph Sullivan describes the life of the Decembrists in exile. Sidney Monas traces the development of censorship un-

der Nicholas I. Robert MacMaster distinguishes several themes in the culture of late Tsarist Russia. Stanley Zyzniewski studies Tsarist policy toward the Poles in the 1860's, while M. K. Dziewanowski explores the Polish revolutionary movement of 1904-1907. C. Jay Smith examines Miliukov's ideas on national minorities, and Firuz Kazemzadeh shows how Russia prevented railway-building in Persia before 1917. This rich variety mirrors Professor Karpovich's own wide-ranging intellect.

At the same time his special enthusiasm for intellectual and literary history finds expression, for more than half of the authors have favored such themes. Illustrative of them are Nicholas Raisanovsky's essay on the relationship of Pogodin and Shevyrev to the Slavophiles, Martin Malia's estimate of Schiller's influence on Belinsky, Herzen, and some of their contemporaries, Frederick Barghoorn's analysis of nihilistic, utopian, and realistic elements in Pisarev, David Hecht's description of Mikhailovsky's attitudes toward America, Arthur Mendel's treatment of the economic programs of the Legal Populists, and George Fischer's exposition of a turning-point in Russian liberalism in the 1890's. On the literary side, Leon Twarog discusses the historical novelist Lazhechnikov and his resurrection, Hugh McLean shows how Laskov, in order to enhance his own reputation, gave posterity a crudely distorted picture of his friend Artur Benni, and Ralph Matlaw compares the esthetic and the political aims in the novels of Turgenev.

Today, as his pupils perpetuate his influence throughout the country in their teaching and writing, Professor Karpovich himself con-

tinues in retirement to make his always valuable contributions to Russian and American culture. The many who bear him gratitude, including thousands who have not been able to know him personally, will rejoice that in this book his pupils have paid him such an impressive and fitting tribute.

RALPH T. FISHER, JR.

Yale University

FRIEDRICH, CARL J. and BRZEZINSKI, ZBIGNIEW. *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*. Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1956. 346 pp. \$4.25.

Here is perhaps the first attempt at a systematic description of totalitarianism—a term that has, of late, come into facile use but whose scope and significance commonly elude scrutiny. In search of a "model" of totalitarian government and society, the authors give a methodical—though not uniformly thorough—survey of a variety of facets—from propaganda to labor camps, from the nature of bureaucracy to the problem of succession—from the experience of the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy.

The volume contains a lot of common-sense commentary and analysis, on the basis of Professor Friedrich's intensive knowledge of political theory and alternative systems of government, and Professor Brzezinski's familiarity with dictatorships, and especially Communism, in operation. It is their conclusion (in effect, an expansion of Friedrich's earlier hypothesis) that totalitarianism is a novel, *sui generis* political category, and that apparently a "syndrome" of six factors is necessary to make a dictator-

ship totalitarian: an official ideology, a single party, and a system of terror and police control, as well as near-complete monopoly of control over the armed forces, the economy, and the means of mass communication.

In the process of surveying the field, Friedrich and Brzezinski make a number of interesting or novel points—on the “rationality” of totalitarianism, on its sense of mission, on the importance of the second string of leaders, on the myths of the in-group and the stereotypes of the enemy, on the complementary nature of propaganda and terror. There is a useful discussion of prior work on the subject. And there is a sensible exposition of the continuing role of ideology in the Soviet Union, as well as a stimulating examination of the flexibility of Communist policy and the “plasticity” of Bolshevik ideology.

Professors Friedrich and Brzezinski posit that all totalitarian regimes have a “tendency to become more ‘totalitarian.’” They are forced to admit that such a hypothesis, for the future, is sheer “extrapolation” — methodologically a most dubious approach, which events since the writing of the book have made even more questionable. Indeed, the central problem raised by the book is whether or not the contours of totalitarianism are already sufficiently identified to permit its unfailing definition. Is Poland totalitarian today? Formally, all six criteria are more or less still applicable, yet the authors would scarcely deny that there is in Warsaw a system qualitatively different from the Soviet “model.” Perhaps, instead of viewing the totalitarian complex as a fairly immutable and

unique, homogeneous species, it would be better to think of it as the extreme part of a spectrum, within which various forms and degrees of control are conceivable. The experiences of Tito’s Yugoslavia, Mao’s China, Franco’s Spain, and Peron’s Argentina might fruitfully be investigated here with greater thoroughness.

Another question stems from the authors’ assertion that none of the variegated forms of resistance to totalitarian rule “seriously threatens the power of the regime.” After Hungary—and recent intellectual trends elsewhere in the Soviet orbit—it seems rather exaggerated to assert that totalitarianism “dehumanizes the subjects of the regime by depriving them of a chance for independent thought and judgement.” Indeed, resistance is a far more fluid concept than the volume suggests; and the “legal opposition” which the Communist Party itself proves to contain and sire (as well as the power struggle within each totalitarian apex) deserves far greater and fuller treatment. Indeed, the ones “most likely to succeed” are precisely the insiders—either disgruntled rivals in the second tier, or disillusioned idealists, or fellow-travelers with mental reservations.

The authors, one suspects, would be the first to welcome further thought and work on this vast subject. And those who are—and should be—interested in it, will be grateful for this very useful summary of our state of knowledge and thinking, and for the contribution to it which Friedrich and Brzezinski have made in this work.

ALEXANDER DALLIN

Columbia University

BERLINER, JOSEPH S., *Factory Management in the U.S.S.R.* Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1957. 386 pp. \$7.50.

RAYMOND, ELSWORTH, *Soviet Economic Progress.* New York, Rinehart, 1957. 56 pp. 75¢.

All students of the Soviet economic system will be highly interested in the new book, *Factory Management in the U.S.S.R.*, by Professor Joseph S. Berliner. This study is probably one of the most important books dealing with a little-explored facet of Soviet industrial life, that is, the practices of Soviet industrial management. The director or manager of a Soviet industrial enterprise is the key to the practical workings of Soviet industry, and his problems and the conditions under which he has to work in order to satisfy the requirements of the Soviet State, are of the greatest interest to all students of Soviet society. The study is based on factual data and is supported by an impressive Soviet bibliography. In addition, the author has been able to interview a number of former Soviet citizens, who have had direct experience with the practical operations of Soviet enterprises, and who are at present residing in the Western world. They include former managers, accountants, engineers, etc. Although the interviews and many of the quotations in the text and references deal primarily with the period prior to World War II, Soviet management problems have not changed to any great extent during the post-war period. This is substantiated by references from Soviet literature through 1956 and Chapter 17 of the study.

This reviewer has been doing research in the field of Soviet economics and knows how difficult it is

to interpret Soviet economic literature: on the one hand, its complete silence on certain salient Soviet economic problems, and, on the other hand, its dogmatism and verbose description of Soviet industrial activities. The testimony of people who spent a part of their life operating Soviet industry, no doubt, must have been invaluable and has added substantially to the completeness of the study. It has also elucidated a great number of points, many of them of vital importance, on the problems of Soviet management and on the ways in which it operates.

Thus, the author has been able to present a picture throwing a great deal of light on the behavior, motivations, and activities of a director or manager of a Soviet production enterprise. He emerges as a live figure, hard-working, harassed, yet he manages to run a going enterprise despite numerous obstacles and uncertainties confronting him in the day-to-day operation of his factory.

The conditions under which Soviet management must operate in order to be successful and the managerial practices developed in the Soviet Union stem directly from the political and economic climax prevailing in the Soviet Union. The state decides and plans what shall be produced and in what quantity and imposes a ruthless and relentless pressure on the people put in charge of production to execute the plans regardless of cost. As a result, the manager is faced not only with high production targets, but also with shortages of material and unrealistic orders from the Kremlin. In order to execute these aims, the manager is, therefore, forced to engage in various irregular or illegal practices because the fulfillment of

the production plan is his primary duty. The Soviet state evaluates the manager essentially in terms of plan fulfillment and rewards him liberally if he is successful. Management problems are, however, compounded by the state's relentless insistence on higher productive targets year after year and because of that the manager is induced to simulate successful performance by some deceptive manipulations, such as minimizing the production capacity of his enterprise, shaving the quality of production, hoarding scarce resources, including labor, and falsifying data and reports. He is accused of unethical conduct in the use of party and ministry influence, of hiring special agents called *tolkach* or "pusher" to take care of the various needs of the enterprise, of finagling the financial resources of the enterprise, etc. Thus, the manager is caught between the demands of the state and the web of regulations and laws prescribing his conduct. The paradox is that their violations are necessary for plant fulfillment. These activities, as Professor Berliner shows, are the inevitable consequences of the demands made on the manager by the state, the nature of the economic world in which he works, and the managerial incentive system.

Soviet Economic Progress by Professor Elsworth Raymond is a pamphlet dealing with several salient characteristics of the Soviet economic system. The study is divided into four main topics: (1) the Basis of Soviet Economic Progress; (2) the Cost of Industrialization; (3) Economic Strength and Weakness; and (4) the Planned Economic Future. These topics are subdivided into other sub-topics and cover a fairly wide area of

Soviet economic activities. This arrangement of topics obviously can be challenged. It has its weaknesses. Why for example, should Soviet transportation be included under the main heading of "Cost of Industrialization?"

It's difficult to form a definite opinion of the study. It is rather general and does not analyze the fundamentals of the Soviet economic system. However, it is clearly and interestingly written. This reviewer has used it as supplementary reading in his course on Soviet Economics and found it quite satisfactory. It gave the students valuable additional information, particularly in the form of quotations from speeches of Soviet leaders and from Soviet periodicals.

MIKHAIL V. CONDOIDE

The Ohio State University

LAMPERT, E. *Studies in Rebellion: Belinsky, Bakunin and Herzen*. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957. 295 pp. 30 shillings. Am. ed., New York, Praeger, 1957. 295 pp. \$6.00.

Perhaps no area of Russian history outside of the Soviet period has been written on more extensively in Western languages than nineteenth-century intellectual history. Yet, too little has been said that goes much beyond what had already been said in Russian by critics of the last decades of the old regime. New materials have come to light, often better critical editions have been published, but understanding of the deeper motivation of the movement has not advanced apace. Dr. Lampert's *Studies in Rebellion* is a highly refreshing exception, which should

serve greatly to raise the level of the discussion.

The book is divided into four parts: an introduction on the intelligentsia, and one essay each on Belinsky, Bakunin, and Herzen. It is the introductory essay which is the least satisfactory. The intelligentsia is treated too much in terms of ideological imperatives and not enough of social and political conditions, which were certainly the root of the problem. More specifically, Dr. Lampert places too much blame for the evils of old Russia on Orthodoxy and the state's persisting "theocratic illusion," both of which come in for a rather old-fashioned attack which is neither very illuminating in itself nor particularly germane to the central problem of the book. Much more than in any "tyranny" of "abstract" supernatural principles set over individuals, the real difficulty lay in such concrete things as autocracy, serfdom, and the police. But this is a rather minor point, and the essays on the first three integral rebels produced by the intelligentsia are excellent indeed.

Dr. Lampert's purpose was not to write biographical sketches of Belinsky, Bakunin, and Herzen, or to discuss them in historical context as products of their age. Rather his intention was to fix with all possible precision the quality of their moral and intellectual personalities. Moreover, he has not produced a primer, but an advanced reader, which presupposes fairly close knowledge of the personalities concerned.

Belinsky, in some respects the most straightforward case, comes through most clearly in Dr. Lampert's treatment. We are presented with a credible and moving picture of a deeply humane, naive and

painfully honest Belinsky. His struggle was against both the barbarism of Nicholaian Russia and his own illusions, the "abstract" absolutes of idealism, the abstract "mankind" of the Left Hegelians or the French socialists; and his solution was the ideal of the moral autonomy of the individual "man," as the only truly humane and civilized value. This characterization of Belinsky rings very true, and the portrayal of the pathos of his search is admirable.

The essay on Bakunin is even more impressive, although the portrait is of necessity less clear, because it is more difficult to make comprehensible the titanic and seemingly inhuman rebellion of Bakunin. Dr. Lampert resolves the problem as well as it can be by abandoning the vain effort to present Bakunin's revolt as rationally or politically comprehensible (unlike Belinsky's or Herzen's). Instead he portrays it as a gratuitous urge to destroy endlessly and limitlessly, springing from a combination of an aggressive desire to dominate yet be dominated by nothing, in turn with a deep loneliness seeking release in "daemonic" negation—all of which in the last analysis remains rather mysterious. To illustrate the "abstract" and fantastic character of Bakunin's revolt Dr. Lampert makes excellent and careful use of Leonid Grossman's contention that Dostoevsky's Stavrogin was a portrait of Bakunin, and one which achieves greater verisimilitude than the more external characterization given by Turgenev in the person of Rudin.

Dr. Lampert's last essay on Herzen is not entirely satisfactory. The latter's general motivation and line of evolution are presented, correctly, as being roughly the same as

Belinsky's: a ceaseless effort to arrive at a concept of human dignity and individual freedom against the pressures of Nicolaian autocracy and the "tyranny" of super-human abstractions, either of religion and idealism or of revolutionary "demagogery."

The result is, as with Belinsky, an intransigent insistence on the freedom of the individual as the only enlightened value. But Dr. Lampert perhaps takes too seriously Herzen's philosophical elaboration of this principle—which he nonetheless analyzes perceptively as a "philosophy of existence"—and unduly neglects Herzen as a politician, which was by far his most interesting and significant role. But here Herzen appears as a much more muddled and tragic figure than Dr. Lampert makes him out to be. For Herzen's grandiose concept of individual liberty was a very abstract and negative thing, which he was never able to attach to any concrete political doctrine, to any possible institutions or to any feasible program. His only consistent political commitment—to the peasant commune—is, given his own strivings for "realism," simply pathetic. In his pursuit of "absolute" freedom, an ideal as simply-mindedly total as any of the absolutes of German metaphysics or French socialism he denounced so eloquently, he wound up with no *real* place to turn whereas he himself wanted desperately to be concerned, not with ideal mirages, but only with living men in concrete reality. To this it might be added that Dr. Lampert is perhaps too indulgent towards Herzen's rantings against the "bourgeois decadence" of the West, which are the index of his political myopia much more than of any "penetrating" in-

sight into European society.

Finally, it is perhaps to be mildly regretted that Dr. Lampert has not given a general conclusion to his book. His three rebels have much in common in their intransigent moralism and liberationism—and in their lack of a mature political sense. This is surely no accident, and much could be said, on the basis of Dr. Lampert's own conclusions, about the general nature of radical opposition to autocracy as it emerged under Nicholas I. Dr. Lampert describes and characterizes with mastery but he does not attempt to explain. However, this was not the task set in his *Studies*; and where so much has been done it would be captious to ask for more.

MARTIN E. MALIA

Harvard University

WITTFOGEL, KARL H. *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power*. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1957. 556 pp. \$7.50.

This volume is devoted to the presentation and verification of a grand-style hypothesis in the field of political science. "Total power," i.e. a political structure where the power of one or a few is limited by nothing and nobody, emerges, almost with necessity, in "hydraulic societies," that is, in areas with fertile soil, but deprived of sufficient precipitations, if large amounts of current water may be supplied by extensive human labor. Such conditions are given in the Orient, in the area reaching from Egypt to China. This was the region that generated total power, although it originated under similar conditions in the Western Hemisphere too.

From the center of origin, total power may expand into areas where conditions just enumerated are not met. This happens either through conquest (facilitated by the existence of total power) or through imitation. Societies into which total power has expanded are called by the author "marginal" or even "submarginal hydraulic societies."

Among the submarginal hydraulic societies, in the author's opinion, one finds Russia; therefore, facts concerning Russia's past or present are often used by him as instances or illustrations of his elaborate theory covering the political, legal, economic, social, religious, and cultural phases of social life. Compiling the scattered statements on Russia which appear in an order at variance with the chronological one, one could construct a view of Russian history as that of a society located on the periphery of the zone of Oriental, or total, power.

Kievan Russia is characterized by the author as both a submarginal hydraulic society and a marginal feudal society. It was submarginally hydraulic because through Byzantium and the Khazars (both affected by Oriental power across the boundary) it received a few patterns typical of Oriental despotism. It was also marginally feudal in that many of its institutions could be compared (and favorably) with those of the Western world of the time.

The Tartar conquest, naturally, accentuated the "hydraulic" aspect of Russian society. The conquerors imposed little of their culture. But their heir apparent, the Grand Duchy of Muscovy, freely imitated many patterns belonging to the administrative system of an Oriental

despotism (e.g., state organization, postal service, an elaborate bureaucratic system, etc.). Sometimes the author does not pay sufficient attention to the fact that certain institutions and practices making Muscovite Russia different from that of Kiev Russia were simultaneously practiced in Western society which he uses as a "negative instance," i.e. a specimen of non-hydraulic society. Such for example, were corporal punishment and judicial torture.

Regarding modern Russia (from Peter the Great to 1917) Wittfogel emphasizes that the self-supporting bureaucracy which formed its actual power center (but was it really self-supporting?) successfully overcame many disasters (such as foreign invasions) while similar structures in the West fell to pieces. In his opinion, this bureaucracy was always looking more West than East (thus driving Russia farther and farther away from the model of hydraulic society). All the great reforms, including Stolypin's agrarian reform, are interpreted from this viewpoint. To that extent he rather admires the bureaucracy of the Tsars and Emperors, but blames it for the exorbitant taxation of the peasants and points to the heavy share of the government in the nation's economy as a survival of Oriental despotism. Here, he is not very convincing, since phenomena similar to those used by him as illustrations of his thesis could be observed in the West as well. The bulk of the Russian railways, he said, were state owned; but all the railways were national property in Germany. Absentee landlordism was wide-spread in Russia; but the same took place in France before the Revolution, and was quite common, even in the

twentieth century, in Spain and southern Italy.

The March, 1917, Revolution created "an open historical situation." Objectively, it was possible to transform Russia into a "multi-centered democracy." But the leaders lacked both experience and resolve. Thus, "the Bolsheviks got their chance largely by default."

The Bolsheviks molded Russia into a body politic quite similar to Oriental despotism. Was this a prelude to an "Asiatic restoration" as sometimes feared by Lenin? No, it was not. First, Asiatic despotism was not so oppressive as it was believed by Marx and Lenin. And, second, the new "apparatus state" (toward the end of the book, this term begins to gain the upper hand over that of bureaucracy) was led by men who knew the potential of modern industry. Therefore they created a new type of despotic state. "The Russian revolution gave birth to an industry-based system of general (State) slavery."

Most of the author's statements about Russia could be made without reference to his general theory of total power. These references often complicate and obfuscate the presentation. But, in Wittfogel's monumental work, Russia is treated only incidentally. The theory must be checked by following it up relative to societies of the purely hydraulic type. This obviously transcends the purpose of the present review.

N. S. TIMASHEFF

Fordham University

POGGIOLI, RENATO. *The Phoenix and the Spider. A Book of Essays about some Russian Writers and their View of the Self.* Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1957. 238 pp. \$5.00.

It is difficult, in a short review, to do justice to Professor Poggioli's book or even to touch upon all the wealth and variety of its component parts. It consists of nine essays of varying length (from 15 to 60 pages), several of which have been published before but are now revised and expanded, while others appear here for the first time. The opening essay on Russian realism and its "tradition" (originally published as part of a symposium on European realism in *Comparative Literature*) serves as a kind of overture, and its main themes are then developed in application to a number of writers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The former are represented by four names: Dostoevsky, Goncharov, Tolstoy, and Chekhov; and the "moderns," by five: Bunin, Rozanov, Vyacheslav Ivanov and Gershenzon (a joint essay on their *Correspondence between Two Corners*), and Babel. With all the disparity of those writers, there is in the book a unity of theme and purpose: the latter, according to the author, was "to convey the Russian view of the psyche as reflected in a few classical and modern masters of Russian prose." Most of the essays are both meaty and stimulating. The essay on Bunin, previously published both in English and in Italian, belongs to the best pieces written about that author. It is centered around *Sukhodol* which Poggioli regards as the masterpiece of Bunin's—a view which the present reviewer is inclined to endorse, although in his

opinion Poggioli underrates Bunin's work written in exile.

The two principal characters of the book—as the author himself says—are Tolstoy and Rozanov. The essays on them are the two longest (the one on Rozanov has been published before, the one on Tolstoy is a *primeur*). It is an aphorism of Rozanov's ("Each soul is a phoenix, and each soul must burn: and history is but the great pyre of the burning souls . . ."), in combination with the "insect" motif, common to both Dostoevsky and Rozanov, that has suggested the title of the book. For Poggioli, Rozanov, who wrote no fiction, is "the peer of the great and visionary masters of modern fiction, of a Proust and a Joyce." A disciple of both Rousseau (whom he does not resemble at all as a writer) and Dostoevsky, Rozanov "penetrated into the depths of the soul even more than was done later by depth psychology, and, as a poet, he was both frightened and fascinated by them." Poggioli is fully aware of those aspects of Rozanov's personality and work which inspired aversion to so many of his contemporaries (and by no means among the Leftist radicals alone). He speaks of Rozanov's "political opportunism and cynicism" and even of his "leaning for spiritual prostitution" as something to be taken for granted. He is even ready to endorse the verdict of Trotsky who described Rozanov as "a wriggling, slippery, sticky worm . . . and like a worm, disgusting." Yet he is apparently inclined to agree with Svyatopolk-Mirsky who called Rozanov the greatest of modern Russian writers. Rozanov was so controversial a man that anything written about him is bound to be controversial. Poggioli's essay is certainly one of the most interest-

ing pieces written about Rozanov, but there are two statements in it to which I must take exception. On p. 180 we read: "In his somber political obscurantism, his interest in popular religion, even his diction and style [Rozanov] belongs to a national school of thinking and writing . . . the most extreme representatives of which are perhaps . . . the philosopher Konstantin Leontiev and the storyteller Nikolay Leskov." While certain ties between Leontiev and Rozanov cannot be denied (and we know that Rozanov felt attracted to Leontiev), when it comes to "diction and style," as well as the style of thinking, it is difficult to imagine a greater difference. Poggioli himself describes Rozanov as "the last Russian bourgeois," and there was nothing Leontiev detested more than the bourgeoisie. Nor was Leontiev's "interest" in religion in the least similar to Rozanov's. As for Rozanov and Leskov, while it may be possible to argue some stylistic resemblances between them, Leskov's "political obscurantism" is largely a legend (nor can this formula be applied so simply to Leontiev), and in their case the differences are also greater than the similarities (it is enough to think of their respective attitudes to Tolstoy). The same, by the way, is true of Leontiev and Leskov. Equally unwarranted seems to be the following bold statement on p. 188: "There is no doubt that [Rozanov] would have approved of the successful Bolshevik attempt to reorganize Russian society in practical and material terms, according to the blueprints of an over-all man." Granted that Rozanov was highly unpredictable, I see no grounds for this certitude.

The essay on Tolstoy is one of

the great *réussites* of the book. Here Poggioli, as he points out himself, has "put aside the tools of criticism, and taken up those of biography instead." Subtly and convincingly, he presents to us Tolstoy in the garb of a fictional character, that of Molière's Alceste, pointing out at the same time that Tolstoy would have fitted even better Rousseau's conception of Alceste. Tolstoy's ties with the eighteenth century are very clearly demonstrated. It is a pity, by the way, that no record of Tolstoy's view of Rozanov has apparently been preserved.

The essay on Ivanov's and Gershenzon's *Correspondence* strikes me as being somewhat unfairly weighted in favor of Gershenzon. And it is certainly strange to read of Gershenzon (who was once described paradoxically as "the last Slavophil in Russia") as "a Herzen and a Westerner of his time" (p. 213).

The book is beautifully printed but, next to a few minor errors of transliteration, one notes a couple of slips of the pen: on p. 46 Nikolay Dobrolyubov, the critic, becomes Alexander; and on p. 65 (line 15 up) the name of Alceste is substituted for that of Philinte.

GLEB STRUVE

University of California

KONOVALOV, S. (Ed.). *Oxford Slavonic Papers*. Oxford, Clarendon Press. Vol. VI, 1955. 143 pp.; Vol. VII, 1957. 134 pp. \$2.90.

LUNT, H. G. (Ed.). *Harvard Slavic Studies*. Cambridge, Harvard University Press, Vol. 3. 1957. 327 pp. \$5.75.

Without compiling statistics, one notes that these new volumes in

the Oxford and Harvard series follow the general emphasis of their predecessors: neither pays much attention to linguistics; and, whereas Oxford favors Russian, Polish, and (increasingly) non-literary topics, Harvard tries to be pan-Slavic and stresses literature. In this review, however, we shall survey only the Russian offerings.

The historical contributions are all in the *Oxford Slavonic Papers* and are of first-rank importance. Professor S. Kononov, in Vol. VII, presents the texts, with brief English summaries, of five letters from Tsar Mikhail Romanov and two from Patriarch Filaret to King James I during 1613-23. In Vol. VI, Kononov rescues from obscurity Ludvig Fabritius, a soldier of fortune whose autobiography, here in English translation, is an important new source for the Razin rebellion. Appended, in the original German, are those portions of a later Fabritius memoir which describes his experiences in Russia as Envoy Extraordinary of a Swedish trade mission. A. W. Palmer's "Lord Salisbury's Approach to Russia, 1898" (Vol. VI) uses new materials for new insights into the background of Salisbury's negotiations for a treaty with Russia over the crucial China problem. A valuable article by N. C. Hunt, in Vol. VII ("The Russia Company and the Government"), draws on the Russia Company's own records to show its vital influencing-role in the Anglo-Russian Commercial Treaty of 1734.

Both the Oxford and Harvard volumes offer literary articles of interest. Professor N.K. Gudzi (Moscow University), in "The Artistic Heritage of Old Russian Literature" (OSP VII), reviews some of the scholarly approaches to Old Rus-

sian Literature and concludes that much more attention should be given to its literary and esthetic values, and proportionately less to "historico-cultural" matters. It is perhaps unfair to judge Gudzi's own history of Old Russian Literature in the light of these demands; but anyone familiar with that mountain of historico-cultural scholarship will appreciate what Gudzi is driving at in this article. It seems promising. But Gudzi, after bowing to a rather primitive concept of esthetics, reminds us that "historical perspective" is necessary after all and, in dreadfully familiar phrases, advances the primacy of content over form. In the same volume (OSP VII) we find selections from the third part of *Svet vechernii*, a collection of V. Ivanov's poems to be published by the Clarendon Press. In an accompanying article, "Etre et mémoire selon Vyatcheslav Ivanov," O. Deschartes presents a competent synthesis of Ivanov's central religious and philosophical ideas, as expounded in the poet's own works.

The Harvard offerings are: Ralph Matlaw's "Recurrent Imagery in Dostoevskij," and Vera Sandomirsky's "The Sad Armchair: Notes on Soviet War and Postwar Lyrical Poetry." Matlaw's is a good introduction to one kind of study that needs to be done, now that we are beginning to realize that Dostoevsky is a literary artist. Matlaw traces the recurrences of insect images in the novels, and shows that these images, whether always consciously planned or not, do in most cases play an important structural and symbolic role. Miss Sandomirsky's beautifully written essay looks at Soviet lyric poetry not so much for its artistry as for what it reveals of the poet himself. She

follows the terrible odyssey of the lyricist through the thirties, the war, and the post-war, and shows splendidly the forms the lyric impulse has taken, and how it has persisted despite notoriously anti-lyrical conditions.

Finally, some miscellanea. Max Vasmer's "Russian River Names" (OSP VI) is an excellent contribution to an unexhausted linguistics problem: taking Slavic names only, he lists them according to their meaning and form. R.K. DasGupta offers an interesting sketch of "G. S. Lebedev (1749-1817): the First Russian Indologist" (OSP VII). James F. Clarke's "The Russian Bible Society and the Bulgarians" (Harvard) belongs properly to the history of Bulgarian Literature; but it is also a good account of the aims and methods of the Bible Society and its efforts to produce a Bulgarian version of the New Testament. And Serge A. Zenkovsky's "The Ideological World of the Denisov Brothers" (Harvard) describes the tremendous importance of these eighteenth-century brothers as revivifiers and organizers of the then-stagnating Old Believer movement, which subsequently burgeoned into a vitally significant force in Russian society.

ROBERT A. MAGUIRE

Columbia University

GINSBURG, MICHAEL, and SHAW, JOSEPH T., (Eds.). *Indiana Slavic Studies*, Vol. I. Bloomington, Indiana University, 1956. 240 pp.

LUCKYJ, G.S.N., ROSE, W.J., and STRAKHOVSKY, L. I., (Eds.). *Canadian Slavic Papers*, Vol. I. Toronto, Canadian Association of Slavists, 1956. 106 pp. \$3.00.

LORD, ALBERT BATES, (Ed.). *Slavic Folklore: A Symposium*. Philadelphia, American Folklore Society, 1956. 193 pp. \$2.50.

These three volumes testify to the steadily growing quantity and depth of Slavic scholarship in North America, especially since two of them represent only the first installment of a new series.

The volume from Indiana contains several substantial articles for persons interested in things Russian. The 51-page lead-off article by Sergei Zenkovsky is the best introduction available in English to Archpriest Avvakum's writings. Zenkovsky opposes the view that Avvakum was a linguistic and stylistic innovator, arguing instead that his style was rooted in the prepetrine literary tradition, and that, indeed, he is qualitatively the foremost representative of Muscovite literature.

Anatoly Koni, prominent jurist and friend of Turgenev, Dostoevsky, Nekrasov, Tolstoy, and Chekhov, is the subject of an informative essay by Michael Ginsburg. Using Koni's memoirs as his principal source, Professor Ginsburg traces his contacts with and influence on the literary greats of his day. In the volume's other two articles on Russian themes Robert Daniels analyzes the changes which occurred in Soviet thought in the 1930's and Thomas Shaw traces the Byronic influences in Lermontov's "Mtsyri."

The Canadian volume contains two substantial articles on Russian literature. Leonid Strakhovsky writes of Pushkin's relations with Tsars Alexander I and Nicholas I. The brunt of his argument is that many of Pushkin's biographers, especially Soviet scholars, have exaggerated the hostility between the

poet and his sovereigns. Although we may concede this point, Professor Strakhovsky seems guilty of exaggeration in the other direction since he ignores or minimizes many of the real irritations which marked the relationship.

C. H. Bedford's essay on Ivan Bunin's *Life of Arsen'ev* treats the novel primarily in its autobiographical aspect. In the linguistic field James St. Clair-Sobell writes of spelling pronunciation in modern Russian, and Constantin Bida offers still more linguistic evidence to support the authenticity of the *Igor Tale*.

About half of *Slavic Folklore* deals with Russian themes. Dmitri Cizevsky examines Old Russian literature and folklore for traces of Yaroslav the Great, who at first glance seems strangely absent from Russian epic verse. Cizevsky finds many passages in the *Chronicle* which appear to be derived from folklore, and in addition identifies a religious song—one part of the "Song of Yegori the Brave"—as dealing with Yaroslav.

George Gibian's article "Dostoevskij's Use of Russian Folklore" is essentially a catalogue of folklore motifs and devices used by the novelist, along with an analysis of *The Landlady* as "a recreation of oral traditions in plot as well as style." Though Gibian's paper is thought-provoking, it seems to this reviewer that not all of the examples cited as Dostoevsky's "use" of folklore can properly be thus labeled. There is no evidence, for example, that "the youngest of three sons" motif used in *The Brothers Karamazov* owes anything to folklore, even though a somewhat similar theme occurs in the latter. Other motifs like the "holy fool" and "mother earth" are more likely

a reflection of Russian traditional attitudes than a direct borrowing from folklore proper.

The volume also contains the text of two short balladic *byliny* collected in the South Ladoga Basin in the 1890's, with an introduction by Roman Jakobson, and an analysis of the eighteenth-century story of Vanka Kain, by Elisabeth Stenbock-Fermor.

J. F. MATLOCK, JR.
Washington, D.C.

YERSHOV, PETER, *Comedy in the Soviet Theatre*. New York, Praeger, 1956. 400 pp. \$5.00.

Students of the U.S.S.R. have long recognized a discrepancy between Soviet theatre, which, though not especially venturesome since Stanislavsky and Meierhold, has maintained on the whole high standards, and Soviet drama, which has produced little of lasting importance. Peter Yershov shows in the present volume that Soviet comedy is no exception to this rule. He traces the development of this branch of literature from the earliest days of the Soviet era—from the more or less spontaneous *agitka* and folk *rayok* of Civil War days (he calls these early efforts "laughter in the ruins"); through the more structured comedy of manners of the 1920's, when, following Lunacharsky's dictum "Back to Ostrovsky," playwrights were relatively free to ridicule human failings in the Nepmen; through the self-conscious "genre" comedies of the early years of planning; through the increasingly moribund output of Socialist Realism, when conscientious playwrights still tried, but usually failed, to strike a balance between the social command and their artis-

tic integrity; eventually to the virtual extinction of comedy after World War II, when the "no-conflict" theory (a tedious view that it was inappropriate to show conflict among Soviet citizens, on the stage or elsewhere, since socialism had eliminated the sources of such conflict) "deprived comedy writers of the negative characters at whose expense they might joke and moralize simultaneously." Yershov concludes, bitterly, that "the history of Soviet comedy is one of tragedy, a microcosm epitomizing the development of all Soviet art." He does not venture a judgement on the fate of comedy after Stalin.

Yershov has performed a great service to students of Soviet literature in this dispassionate and detailed study, the content of which he considers, too modestly, should be "regarded not as a history of Soviet comedy but, rather, as materials for such a history." The book would have been of value if only for its summaries of comedies so scattered as to be virtually inaccessible to the average student of Soviet literature, and of course wholly unknown to the casual student who reads no Russian. But Yershov does a great deal more than summarize out-of-print comedies. He brings into his analysis a fine perspective on the history of comedy in other countries, as well as in pre-revolutionary Russia, and thereby gives a dimension to his study not always found in comparable studies of Soviet literature.

This reviewer raises two questions about Yershov's study. First, might it not have been appropriate to treat Soviet puppetry as a legitimate branch of Soviet comedy? The art of puppetry is, of course, closer to "theatre" than to "drama," yet the skits prepared by such mas-

ters as Obraztsov and performed in puppet theatres throughout the Soviet Union command respect in their own right. Here, at least, there is laughter, and not infrequently a vehicle for potent social satire. Second, is it possible in contemporary Soviet drama to make a significant distinction between comedy and tragedy? It occurs to this writer that the very characteristics of Soviet literary policy which have emasculated comedy tend to blur such distinctions. In preserving the classical sub-divisions, in order to focus attention on what he wishes to consider one category of Soviet drama, Yershov ignores many plays which differ from those in his category only slightly, if at all.

CHARLES McLANE

Dartmouth College

Sudby Rossii, (Russia's Destiny). New York, Association of Russian Narodniks, Vol. I., 1957. 198 pp. \$2.20.

This is a collection of thirteen essays written by scholars and writers who belong to three different generations and whose background and experiences cover a range as wide as the age scale. What is striking in view of these divergent personal characteristics of the contributors is the unanimity in attitudes, the common spirit that pervades the collection.

Beginning with an essay by Professor M.M. Karpovich on "The Traditions of Russian Social Thought" and ending with an article by A.F. Kerensky on "The People and the Government," the issues examined by the authors stretch along a continuous road which leads from a patch of light through

a somber area of total darkness to a faint glimmer of a new dawn.

The light is kindled by Professor Karpovich with his analysis of the basic traits of Russia's pre-revolutionary intelligentsia—their striving for intellectual freedom and independence from state supervision and above all, their respect for the value and dignity of the human personality. Dostoevsky's prophecy in *The Possessed*, of the approaching darkness—the slavery inherent to Communism—is then discussed by F.A. Stepun, with particularly interesting comments on the figures of Stepan Verkhovensky and Kirilov. Three articles deal with the somber aspects of contemporary Soviet Russia. N.V. Naokov examines the use of hatred by the Communist regime as a tool of propaganda in manipulating the masses. V.A. Nikitin traces the evolution of the Communist Party with emphasis on its latest stage—the formation of a powerful, exclusive elite of some 200,000 people from among the 7 million party members and candidates for admission. And I.A. Kurganov deals with the most tragic victims of enslavement—the peasantry—surveying step by step the methods used to convert this largest segment of Russia's population into an unfree labor force.

Most of the remaining essays are devoted to the signs of beginning ferment and stirring resistance against oppression among the people, drawn mostly from newspaper articles and current Soviet fiction. Most illuminating among this third group of essays is N.S. Timasheff's. After a cautious and thoughtful evaluation of data available on the state of religion in Russia, he comes to the conclusion, that probably some 50 million people out of a total population of 200 million have

returned to the fold of the Church. This is not a set figure, but rather a ratio currently maintained through the spiritual cycle not uncommonly traversed by the average Soviet citizen. Many return to religious belief upon reaching mid-

dle age, after having passed, in their youth, through a phase of state-sponsored atheism.

VALENTINE TSCHEBOTARIOFF BILL
Princeton University

Errata

The following misprints occurred in Serge Zenkovsky's article, "The Russian Church Schism" in the October, 1957 issue of *The Russian Review*:

- p. 41, line 17—reads: "The Muscovite church renounced the changes"
Should read: "The Muscovite church agreed to the changes"
- p. 53, line 17—reads: "when Catherine II reduced persecution of the Old Believers, the later began to . . ."
Should read: "when Catherine II reduced persecution of the Old Believers, the latter began to . . ."
- p. 53, line 23—reads: "and such Old Believer bourgeois families at Morozov, Riabushinsky, etc . . ."
Should read: "and such Old Believer bourgeois families as Morozov, Riabushinsky, etc . . ."
- p. 56, line 16—reads: "the notorious adviser to Emperor Alexander II . . ."
Should read: "the notorious adviser to Emperor Alexander III . . ."

THE PHOENIX AND THE SPIDER

By **RENATO POGGIOLI**. A brilliant collection of essays on the prose works of nine Russian writers—Rozanov, Tolstoy, Goncharov, Dostoevski, Chekhov, Bunin, Ivanov, Herschensohn, and I. Babel. Dealing with various conceptions of the creative mind, the essays as a whole reveal a distinctively Russian view of the psyche. \$5.00

RUSSIAN THOUGHT AND POLITICS

Harvard Slavic Studies, IV

Edited by **HUGH McLEAN**, **MARTIN E. MALIA**, and **GEORGE FISCHER**. Twenty-six illuminating essays concerned with the intellectual and political development of modern Russia. The subjects range from "The Russian National Character" and "The Russian Autocracy and Its Officials" to "Lenin in 1917" and "The Sovietization of Uzbekistan." This volume is dedicated to the renowned scholar Michael Karpovich and each of the contributors is a former pupil of his. \$7.50

RUSSIAN LIBERALISM

From Gentry To Intelligentsia

By **GEORGE FISCHER**. Was there ever a chance of a Western-type of free society in Russia? In this important book Mr. Fischer traces the plight of the liberal in Russian society from the Great Reforms to the 1905 Revolution. He discusses the attempts at reform which were made by an enlightened gentry and later by a new intelligentsia, why these attempts failed, and the light that Russian liberalism throws on the dilemma of many underdeveloped societies today.

\$4.50

Aleksandr Radishchev's

JOURNEY FROM ST. PETERSBURG TO MOSCOW

Translated by **LEO WIENER**; edited with introduction and notes by **R. P. THALER**

Primarily an appeal to the rulers and the gentry to abolish slavery and institute needed reforms at once, Radishchev's *JOURNEY* is often called the starting point in Russian intellectual history. First published in 1790, the book was banned immediately. All copies that could be found were collected and burned, but the few that remained in circulation had profound effects on the thinking of the young intelligentsia. This is the only English translation of the work—exciting reading both from a literary and historical point of view.

\$5.00



Through your bookseller, or from

HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS

79 Garden Street, Cambridge 38, Massachusetts

WORLD POLITICS

A Quarterly Journal of International Relations

Under the Editorial Sponsorship of the

CENTER OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

WORLD POLITICS — Vol. X, No. 3, April 1958

Contents

- Ten Theories in Search of Reality: The Prediction
of Soviet Behavior in the Social Sciences by DANIEL BELL
The Reunification of Germany and Security for Europe by FRITZ ERLER
Some Political Aspects of Economic Development in India .. by WILFRED MALENBAUM
Family Imagery in a Passage by Mao Tse-tung: An Essay
in Psycho-cultural Method by JOHN H. WEAKLAND
The Middle East as a Subordinate International System by LEONARD BINDER

Review Articles

- Elite Communication and the Governmental Process:
Samoa and the United States by ROBERT E. LANE
International Information: Research and Policy by LEO LOWENTHAL
Theory and Practice in Recent Studies of
Japanese Politics by ROBERT E. WARD
Some Light on the Far East by MARION J. LEVY, JR.
On NATO Pooling by MALCOLM W. HOAG
The Analysis of African Nationalism by MARTIN L. WILSON, JR.

Subscriptions \$6.00 a year, (two years, \$10.00) single copies, \$2.00

Address: WORLD POLITICS

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS, Box 231, Princeton, N. J.

SOVIET SURVEY

Edited by Walter Laqueur

The current issue of Soviet Survey (a quarterly of 80 pages) contains
a symposium on the cultural scene in Communist China.

The principal contents are:

PHILOSOPHY

O'Brien

CONFUCIANISM AND RELIGION

D. E. Watkins

THE INTELLECTUALS

Roderick MacFarquhar

HISTORIOGRAPHY

J. R. Levenson

THE SOVIET IMPACT

J. P. McCarthy

POPULATION POLICY IN CHINA
AND RUSSIA

Leopold Labedz

ECONOMIC DOCTRINE

Stuart Kirby

NATIONAL MINORITIES UNDER
KRUSHCHEV

Walter Kolarz

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION \$2

SOVIET SURVEY

25 HAYMARKET

LONDON S. W. 1

ENGLAND

